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DOCUMENTS

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# MANAGEMENT

VOL. 5 No. 1 1984

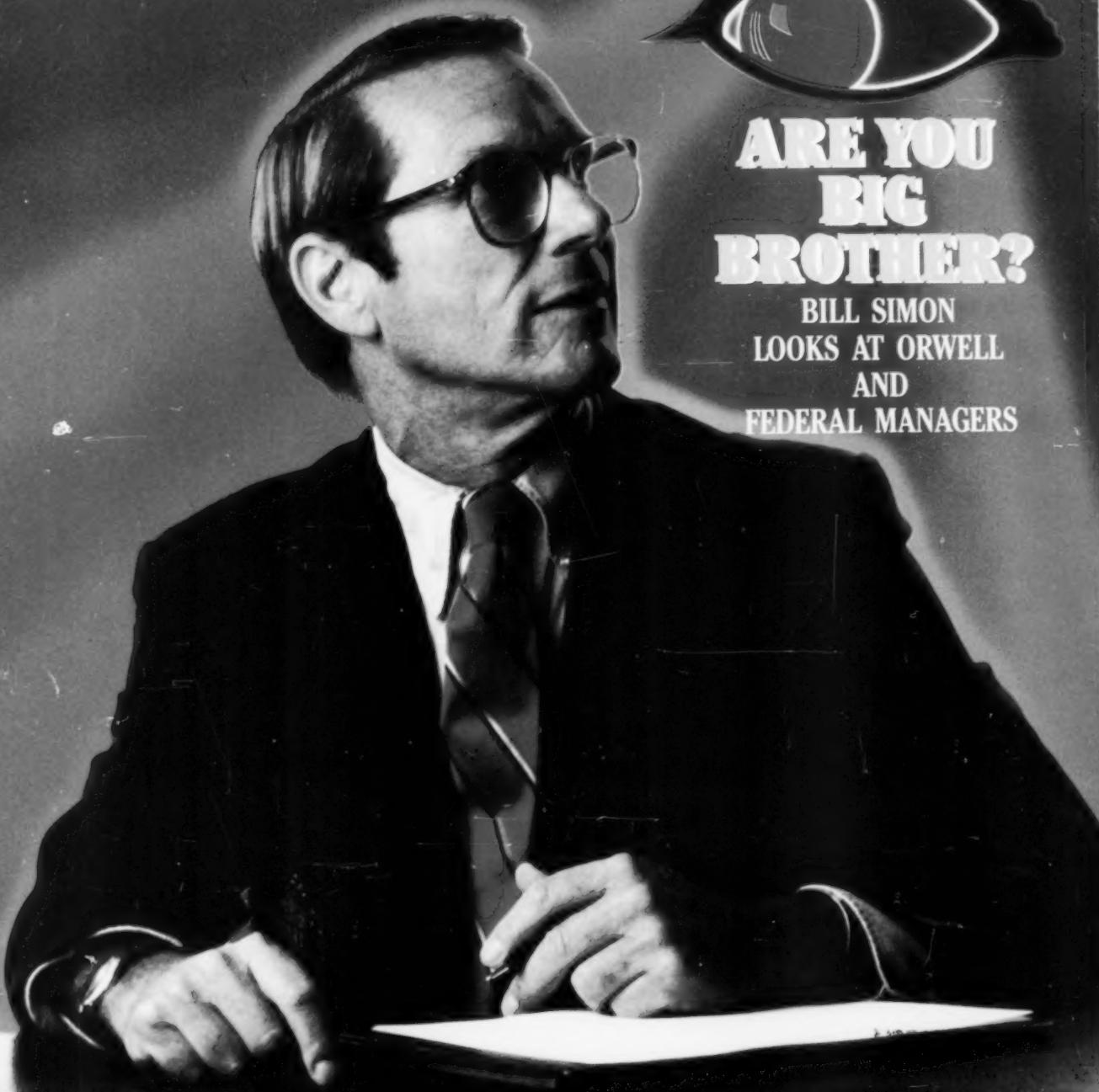


Walter Williams Sees Baby Brothers



## ARE YOU BIG BROTHER?

BILL SIMON  
LOOKS AT ORWELL  
AND  
FEDERAL MANAGERS





"The new aristocracy was made up for the most part of bureaucrats...people whose origins lay in the salaried middle class and the upper grades of the working class, brought together by the barren world of...centralized government. They were less avaricious, less tempted by luxury, hungrier for pure power."

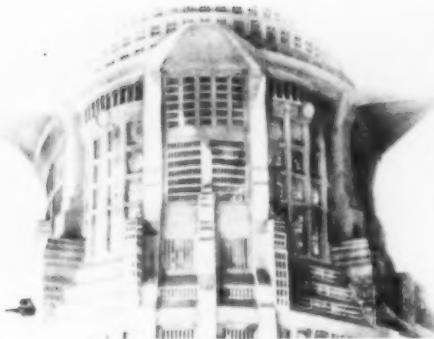
G. Orwell, 1984

"Being good at government means knowing when you are doing too much and knowing when you aren't."

D. Moynihan

"You and I have a rendezvous with destiny. We will preserve for our children this, the last best hope for man on earth, or we will sentence them to take the last step into a thousand years of darkness."

R. Reagan



## WHAT'S AHEAD FOR FED MANAGERS?

- Seasoned Washingtonians' post-election predictions
- Rereleased Metropolis—a message for managers
- Bob Graham—Sunshine State sounds off
- Grace Hopper calls 'Attention'
- 'Most Wanted' phone numbers for managers

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1984

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DIGGING UP ORWELL—

## A Good Scare

By David A. Turner, Editor

You'll find no high brow, dreary articles about George Orwell's 1984 in **Management**'s special issue. Our contributors have tailored well-woven pieces into a pattern guaranteed to fit government executives tighter than a skin diver's suit.

Wall Street wundermeister Bill Simon, humorist and 1984 presidential candidate Jim Boren, *Reader's Digest* honcho Ken Tomlinson, libertarian economist Walt Williams and FDR's son Elliott Roosevelt will challenge and amuse civil service managers by answering the question, "Have federal careerists become Big Brother?"

Our authors find some common ground. But each is a public policy celebrity with established followings and distinct messages to deliver on Orwell and federal managers.

Why is **Management** addressing the topic? Is there, as Tallulah Bankhead once quipped, "less in it than meets the eye?" I believe not. There probably isn't an audience fictionist Orwell would have been more eager to address during 1984's "anniversary" than **Management**'s readers. He might have pointed out that the career destinies of federal managers and the ways they embrace their roles as public administrators are pivotal to playing out his drama.

Rather than wondering what more Orwell might have advised if he hadn't died in 1950 while completing the novel, **Management** rounded up a group of Washington insiders. Heading up this band is cover feature writer William E. Simon, who is best known for his years as Treasury Secretary directing the biggest government financial apparatus since Pharaoh and as one of the toughest critics of public sector management in print (*A Time for Action*).

### Meeting Bill Simon

Approaching Simon in his Morristown, New Jersey, corporate lair and troubling him to pen a helpful piece for career bureaucrats turned out to be precisely the adventure veteran Simonists might have predicted. Does he still snap at government underlings daring to venture within biting distance?

Warm welcomes remain a vestigial skill for this nonsense manager of men. As industrialist Peter Grace mentions in an earlier interview with **Management**, "Bill's so impatient. I love him, but as a bond trader with Salomon Brothers he learned to do everything in a second. He has a very low tolerance for delays."

Yours truly was given "60 seconds to explain what it is you want me to write and you've already wasted 10 seconds saying good morning."

Compounding the tension, my intrusion and publication deadline were not dovetailing with Simon's long-

standing commitment to the 1984 Olympic Games. As voluntary head of the U.S. Olympic Committee, he was preparing to spend several weeks in Los Angeles.

It turns out William E. Simon has a soft spot for federal managers. "My hat comes off to anybody who can manage in that mess... I'll consider the Orwell thing." Dismissed. End of conversation. Total lapsed time 56 seconds. And within ten minutes Simon's secretary, Mary Ann, was telling me he would accept the assignment.

Later, during a picture session with **Management** cover photographer Jon Feingersh, Simon submitted to some additional queries. Does he plan a return to Washington?

"To do the sort of management shake-up I'd want, a guy needs to have grass-roots support beyond the Beltway. Developing such backing takes time and energy."

Hide intact, I pressed on. "What about a future run for the Presidency? Is it in the cards?"

"For your magazine?"

"Yes sir."

"No way."

"No way" to answer the question, or 'no way' to run for the White House?"

"No way, dammit."

Brusk? You bet. But Simon is a producer—and a man who respects production schedules. Two weeks after the Olympics and two days before our deadline his article arrived Express Mail.



### A nameless skill

I accompanied **Management** reporter Malcolm Kline on his interview with *Reader's Digest*'s new managing editor Kenneth Tomlinson. Actually, Kline was interested in Tomlinson's recent work as head of Voice of America—and in picking up any hints for readers who manage government communications operations.

Most impressive—Tomlinson's instinct as an expeditor. He eagerly dives beneath rigid managerial postures and emerges with options for getting around brick-wall personnel and policy obstacles. Tomlinson doesn't bend rules and he's not a confrontationist but his awesome willingness to use surprise tactics has overwhelmed forces at the Voice which successfully resisted past innovations. *Reader's Digest* doubtless is paying a pretty penny for so remarkable a talent.

George Mason University economist Walt Williams roughs up feds in the always controversial "Another View" column. While his writing style is combative, in person he displays a vulnerable earnestness which might win over even a hostile *Phil Donohue Show* audience.

Life-long Democrat and novelist Elliott Roosevelt comments on Orwell and federal managers in the book review section. We'll try to bring him back for a more extensive exchange of ideas in the future.

Special thanks to the artists and photographers whose contributions helped **Management** breathe life into the remains of a stiff 34-year-old topic. Enjoy. ■

# NITTY GRITTY

Peter Grace has received a public service "Nobel Prize" for his work on the President's Private Sector Survey on Cost Control (the Grace Commission). He received \$5,000 and a gold-on-silver medallion as winner in the public-service-by-a-private-citizen category. The award is sponsored by the American Institute for Public Service. Other 1984 winners include Astronaut Sally Ride and FBI Director William Webster. "These are individuals of the highest caliber," says Institute chief Samuel Beard. "They don't represent any particular ideological viewpoint."



Linking employee's pay to performance is corporate management's top priority say Towers, Perrin, Forster and Crosby in *USA Today*. The survey by the Association of Executive Search Consultants shows the number two priority is improving supervisors' work evaluation skills. Corporate demand for middle managers competent in such skills is up the second quarter of 1984, from 43.5 to 49 percent. The increase only covers jobs in the \$60,000 to \$99,000 range.

Vulcanized mind meld. Stand aside, Mr. Spock. In ten years Westinghouse will market a system to monitor employee thoughts. By analyzing brain waves, employers will know if their workers are concentrating. "We think it's a good measure of mental workload," says Louis Harris of Westinghouse's Human Services Laboratory. His lab is testing a "baseball cap" helmet which hooks into a brain-wave-monitoring computer and flashes warnings if the wearer's attention wanders. Maybe Orwell was a decade too early?



Video rocks unions. A new film—*Working Without Unions*—is changing the way business students and workers view union membership, according to *Wall Street Journal*. The percentage of pro-union business students at two Baltimore colleges (108-student sample) dropped from 20 to 6 percent after seeing the film. The 68 percent who were skeptical about the value of unionism climbed to 85 percent after viewing the film, reports the *Journal*. Baltimore lawyer Edward Gutman produced the 15-minute video and has distributed over a thousand copies.

Courtesy  
Paramount Pictures Corporation

**B**aby boomers play for keeps. Competition is fierce for 25-39-year-olds scrambling for limited job slots at the top, reports *Business Week* in its cover story on baby boom-aged MBA grads. There's a "surplus problem" at companies such as AT&T where middle managers are leaving too slowly for these up-and-comers. (*Management's* last issue reported on baby-boom bosses in government.) Top corporate execs are often "antiboomer," notes *Business Week*. **Weightman Inc. President Charles Coffey**, for example, says "they are spoiled as hell...their expectations are tremendous." However, two-thirds of Coffey's 100 workers are boomers and are credited with making his advertising company the most competitive in Philadelphia.

**L**ocal and state governments give the public "the most for their money," according to a **Gallup poll** done for the **Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations**. This is the first time since 1972 federal officials have not finished first. The poll also shows "strong public sentiment for spending cuts in lieu of tax hikes."

On the other hand, when **Colorado Governor Richard Lamm** checked on his 68 state government department heads at 3:00 p.m. one Friday during August, ten were absent without leave. Summertime and the living...

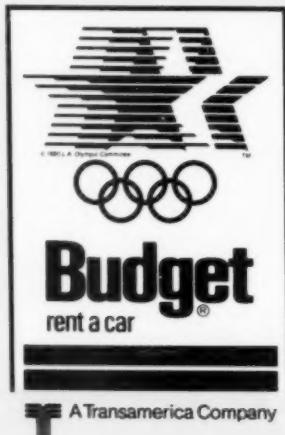
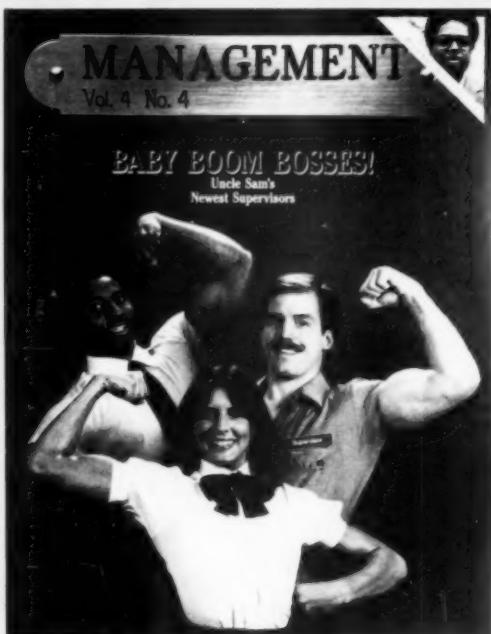


**S**ticking power. A postage stamp honoring the 100th birthday of American civil service is among 200 winners selected by the **Art Director's Club of Metropolitan Washington** for display at their 35th annual art show. Over 2,500 entries from major corporations, government agencies and private institutions vied for this "excellence in graphic design" kudo. **MDB Communications' Kathleen Herring** designed the stamp for the Office of Personnel Management's year-long anniversary celebration.

**F**eds take the stand. Federal execs serve as human "ready references," testifying 3,200 times annually for the U.S. **House of Representatives** according to **Idea Management Associates (IMA)**. A 12-month study by IMA—*Congressional Testimony: Who Testifies and At What Cost*—reveals "federal agencies pay \$2 million annually in base salaries for their principal witnesses and immediate support staff" to take the stand during congressional hearings. Almost half of Congress' 10,700 annual witnesses are federal employees. **State workers** account for 6 percent.

**B**argain Cadillacs. "All members of Uncle Sam's family" will receive a special \$24 daily rate (unlimited mileage, economy through full-size cars) says **Budget Rent A Car President Morris Belzberg**. A Navy press release has urged all managers to use **Budget** for business travel.

**O**bsessed" with excellence. A California research psychologist has studied 1,500 super achievers and concludes "peak performers are trained not born." The key to such training is instilling a sense of "mission," says **Performance Sciences Institute head Charles Garfield** who suggests managers focus on "doers." They will stick to the job longer than most, says Garfield, so why not set work standards to help the doers' cadre excell? Don't waste time on the "workaday schleps, the 95 percent who complain they can't do anything," he advises.



# GOVERNMENT CARD MEASURES UP

By Mark Tapscott

Citicorp Diners Club's new federal employee credit card may measure just two-by-three inches but the diminutive white and blue piece of plastic already is saving the taxpayers millions of dollars and racking up stunning acceptance levels among Uncle Sam's managers and workers.

"I traveled through England and all over Europe with it," says Jim Williams of the Department of Transportation, "and was not billed until 45 days after the charges had been incurred.

"Of course, by that time, I had the reimbursement in hand. It's easier than guessing how much I'd need, working against the advance and being out-of-pocket until the vouchers can be processed."

Williams' satisfaction with the card may well account for the more than 1,000 federal employees receiving the card every week since its introduction by the General Services Administration (GSA) nearly a year ago. Twenty-three federal departments and agencies have converted their travel systems to the card.

The Pentagon's Terence Conway says another 500,000 Defense Department personnel will have the card by 1986 because "tens of millions of dollars can be saved every year" through the GSA-managed program.

"Over 10,000 Department of Agriculture employees are currently using the cards for official travel expenses," according to John Franke, USDA's Assistant Secretary for Administration, "because USDA em-

ployees appreciate and understand not only the convenience of modern methods but the benefits of improved ways of carrying out their respective missions."

With the Citicorp Diners card, federal employees pay for routine travel expenses such as airplane tickets, hotels and meals and then are billed for those expenses at their home addresses. Employees are reimbursed by their agencies for the exact amount of the charged expenses.

The new travel expense system has resulted in a 20 percent reduction in cash accounts maintained by agencies for travel advances. Charges by federal employees using the card have quadrupled since the first quarter of 1984, according to GSA.

"Initially, there was a reluctance on the part of some federal managers because travel expenses are traditionally an area of constant headaches and at least the old system was familiar to them," Citicorp Diners executive Steve Hesse explains. "As word has spread, though, about how much more convenient the system is for employees and the budgetary savings that are possible, acceptance has soared."

Proposals for a credit card for traveling federal employees have floated around the bureaucracy for years. It was not until President Reagan appointed Gerald Carmen in 1981 to head GSA, that obstacles were cleared. A competitive bidding process resulted in a contract for Citicorp Diners. Aggressive marketing plans by GSA have fueled the increasing number of agencies and employees using the card and a training course for federal managers offered by the Office of Personnel Management is being developed to aid implementation in agencies using the card.

Federal managers seeking additional information on the program should contact GSA's Ivan Michael Schaeffer at (703) 557-1273. ■



Guess who's coming to Diners.



Health and Human Services Secretary Margaret Heckler receives her credit card from Citicorp Diners Senior Vice President Jack Flynn.

# ARE YOU BIG BUSINESS?



## An Orwellian Bureaucracy?

By William E. Simon

A quarter of a century has passed since George Orwell published his famous novel *1984*, in which he saw the spirit of man crushed under pervasive, brutal, totalitarian government. Fortunately, Orwell's fears have not been realized in any Western country. But there are occasional reminders of the dangers of a demanding, faceless bureaucracy run out of control—even here in the United States.

A few years ago I had some authority—however nebulous—over the Internal Revenue Service (IRS), so I take a special interest in what the agency does to make life difficult for ordinary taxpayers. A recent instance illustrates the kind of thing which gives people the *1984* shivers.

As a part of the Tax Equity Fiscal Responsibility Act (1982), Congress gave IRS authority to prosecute taxpayers who file frivolous returns—for example, claiming hundreds of dependents or denying Congress' power to levy income taxes. So far so good. Then comes the enthusiastic enforcement by Big Brother's Little Brothers of the IRS.

One report in the *Atlanta Constitution* tells how Montana taxpayer Donna Todd filed a return and paid \$35 on less than \$3,000 in earnings. She added the note, "Signed involuntarily under penalty of statutory punishment." The "frivolous return" alarm went off, and IRS hawks swooped down on this insolent sparrow. They imposed a fine, took possession of her meager bank account and filed a lien on her home. Only an outcry prompted by network television forced IRS to back off. Bonnie Eld of Boise, Idaho, filed a perfectly straightforward return claiming a refund. She also inked out four words on the tax form. Off went the "frivolous return" alarm. IRS hit her with a \$500 fine and demanded it be paid before she could appeal it. She paid and appealed. Her appeal was denied without explanation.

Fortunately, Eld had enough sense

to contact her Senator, Steve Symms (R-ID). Symms confronted IRS Commissioner Egger. Egger caved in, agreed to repay the fine with interest, sent a letter of apology to the victim and promised to issue clarifying instructions to his agents. Orwell would have been relieved.

It is too much to generalize from these and other cases. I do not believe today's Winston Smith (Orwell's protagonist in *1984*) is in daily jeopardy from a huge, grinding government bureaucracy ready to stifle every act of individual independence. Yet that any of this goes on is a cause for worry.

A powerful enforcement bureaucracy swooping down on helpless citizens conjures images of Orwell's *1984*, but there are other troubling aspects of today's government bureaucracies: the inefficiency, lack of managerial accountability and absence of meaningful supervisory incentives.

Chronic inefficiency is a sure sign of monopoly. The business world deals harshly with inefficiency. Inefficient firms, unless propped up by special privilege conferred by government, sooner or later go down the drain.

Not so in governmental programs. Absent the pressure of effective competition, such government bureaus can stumble on forever, soaking up appropriations, producing little or nothing of value, but never fearing retribution. Bureau heads may come and go with new administrations but life in the bureaucracy rolls on slowly and sweetly.

### Your power source

By their nature, government bureaus are relatively unaccountable to control by the President's appointees or even the President himself—let alone the people of this country. I remember one occasion during the Nixon years when the President called in various chiefs of regulatory bodies. He declared in the strongest terms he wanted the burden of unnecessary regulation lifted, and pretty damn quick.

He actually banged on the table and told agency heads, "Come back in a month with 50 unnecessary regulations abolished." So far as I could tell, the 50 regs were never abolished and the bureaucracy went on about its business. So much for the "Imperial Presidency."



Government conducted in this fashion and on this scale is not—and cannot be—accountable to the people. It is too remote to be observed and monitored. It is too huge, complex and secretive to be understood. Worst of all, you—the people making the crucial day-to-day decisions—have little reason to be responsive to the public, and your interests can come to diverge sharply from those of the average citizen and taxpayer.

Like the worker in competitive private industry, the government employee's first objective is preservation of his job. Unlike a private sector manager, a federal executive does not necessarily keep his or her job by extra efforts, high performance, initiative or risk-taking. Given the circumstances of bureaucratic employment, that is more likely to be the path to trouble.

In your own jobs, the path to security is the path of attending meetings, providing ambiguous responses to inquiries, committing to as little as possible, minimizing risk and hunkering down when an occasional storm appears. Long ago, this same attitude filtered down to rank-and-file employees.

Many of the most thoughtful federal managers recognize that they have no tangible incentive to get problems solved. A solved problem implies the end to an assignment and a RIF of

personnel. Thus we had, during my government service, a Smallpox Bureau in Health, Education and Welfare (now Health and Human Services) which consumed over a million dollars annually although smallpox was last seen in this country in 1947. Perhaps the bureau still exists. The indestructible Foreign Claims Commissions are another excellent example of bureaucratic immortality.

These observations will be viewed as an indictment of these civil service managers, and I would be ingenuous

***Orwell's dread vision may not be upon us...but reforms must be advocated by government managers themselves...***

to claim they are not. But in fairness, a great deal of the blame for this state of affairs must be attributed to the inherent nature of the system in which you must function.

It is asking too much of you to play superman or saint. People analyze the system on which their livelihood depends and try to maximize their returns. Government's system rewards wrong behavior. It is thus a bit unfair to attack inhabitants of a system for playing by the rules. Rules need to be changed.

### **Fire power**

To instill a sense of accountability back into the federal bureaucracy we must give government managers power to hire and fire.

Rupert Murdoch, who owns a lot of publications, points out the buck doesn't actually stop on the President's desk. It should stop, says Murdoch, "with the guy who signs off on the paychecks." If government managers are denied this basic, employer prerogative, then accountability, "the buck" evaporates.

Earlier articles in **Management** have dwelt upon the need for more accountability. Milton Friedman simply would return us to the "spoils system," as he so candidly calls it. *Washington Monthly* publisher Charles Peters, author of the "Neoliberal Manifesto," calls for fixed two-and-a-half-year terms for new civil service hires and a five-years-and-out rule. Under the Peters rule, up to half of the civil service would be relatively short-term employees.

Friedman's system would allow the President and his appointees to hire and fire everybody in their agencies, all the way down to the semi-mythical GS-1. While certainly reinstating the power to hire and fire, it strikes me this plan is overkill. The Peters plan is aimed in a somewhat different direction. He emphasizes the opportunity for outsiders to come into the govern-

## ***In Name Only***

By Donald J. Devine

**A**merica's civil servants are concerned about their lagging image with many of their fellow citizens in the private sector. Strange as it may seem, George Orwell's *1984* holds the key needed to unlock the mystery of public opinion for and about civil service in the 1980s—accountability.

Public approval is a natural by-product when federal managers are accountable for the performance and productivity of their employees. Good management and good human relations both point in the same direction. Performance must be the central element in the government's personnel system. It can prove the public can be served without being

controlled.

The old "bigger is better" philosophy is collapsing in the face of a far more practical formula—leaner and more accountable management equals more productive government.

Supporting supervisors, managers and employees who inspire outstanding performances is a top Reagan Administration priority—pay-for-performance incentives are becoming a very real part of the Washington scene.

In Orwell's model, innovation was discouraged and mindless regimentation produced stagnated government. Good performance management, however, rewards imagination and creativity—it provides incentives to

perform the public's work better.

Thomas Peters and Robert Waterman, authors of the best-selling *In Search of Excellence*, find successful private sector companies support strong managers—men and women who confidently enlist employee input and reward achievers. I believe government can operate on the same principle.

President Reagan has set a new management tone both here in Washington and in government's regional and area offices. His changes reflect a determination to heed *1984*'s warning and make Uncle Sam accountable to the people and not their master. ■

ment, presumably bringing with them new ideas and some appreciation for what the government does for—and to—the people of the United States. They would have to get out of government before they became career bureaucrats. But there only would be one moment at which those employees could be fired—at the end of their first two-and-a-half-year hitch.

### Turkey slices

A far better scheme, it seems to me, is one described as the "Turkish Civil Service Plan." As any Redskins fan can tell you, "the Turk" is the mythical figure who visits training camp late at night and with his sharp scimitar cuts players from the squad until it is down to the required size. When a player fails to show up at practice during this cutting period, veterans nod their heads knowingly and say "Poor Willie—the Turk got him last night."

The Turkish Civil Service Plan is very simple. Each year it allows every agency and bureau chief to cut up to 10 percent of his or her subordinates. The chief can then replace them with qualified persons of his or her choosing. This gives employees a definite incentive not to be among the worst 10 percent of the agency's employees. This is not quite the same as wanting to be among the agency's best 10 percent, but it is definitely a step in the right direction.

I recall a conversation about an employee in the Commerce Department who was goofing off and not getting his work done. "I looked into the possibility of getting this joker fired," said his manager (a GS-16 section chief). "Then one of the guys from personnel explained what I had to do. Against my better judgment I had a go at it.

"After six months I actually was able to force him out. But then I looked back and discovered I had spent approximately half of my working days trying to get rid of this turkey. There were forms to fill out, meetings with counsel, affidavits, presentations to review boards, phone calls—you name it. By the time I got done giving this guy the gate, my own performance was beginning to suffer. In fact, my branch's overall performance would have been better if I had stuck to my own work and simply allowed this guy to go on goofing off. The only advantage was that after six

# Protecting Our Protectors

By Michael W. Orenstein

**I**f the many law enforcement groups in this country, none carries a heavier burden than the elite group charged with protecting our President.

Day in and day out, 24 hours a day, the Secret Service must remain at the apex of an emotional roller coaster—always alert, ready to pounce on the smallest of dangers to their public charge.

What incentives and management techniques nourish these men and women to perform and shield the Chief Executive? They are more like the immortals of Xerxes' Persian Guard than the "little beetle-like men" Orwell predicted would "scuttle so nimbly through the labyrinthine corridors of Ministries." The Secret Service's never-smiling guardians ("We don't want to encourage bystanders' questions") know their combined strengths can protect the President only if they each perform according to job standards most public servants would never dream of accepting. Their business-like manner infuses confidence and reflects immense credit on the civil service. What is the key to their success?

"Motivation—plain and simple," Secret Service Agent Mike Tarr tells **Management**. The agents' "inner-selves" provide a level of motivation to perform beyond grades like "fully satisfactory" or "outstanding."

"No time here for daily pep-talks like those on Hollywood's *Hill Street Blues*," says Tarr. "Candidates must be self-motivators and self-starters. We cannot afford to have any other type of individual

because of the importance of their roles."

Tarr, who is on a rotating assignment in the public affairs office at the Washington, D.C., headquarters, emphasizes this point.

Whether in the friendly backyard of the White House or on the unpredictable urban streets of Bigcity, USA, secret service agents have only one chance to get it right.

"Our managers encourage thoroughness because that skill inspires a team spirit."

Despite differences in performance levels, these agents share the same personnel system covering other civilian careerists. They are paid from the GS pay schedule and receive similar leave benefits.

Individuals in both groups are eligible for awards which recognize special service to their missions and the Secret Service has been a leading proponent in recognizing outstanding employees. The *Secret Service Valor Award* was awarded to four agents, Jerry S. Parr, Timothy J. McCarthy, Raymond A Shaddick and Dennis V. N. McCarthy for their life-saving efforts during the 1981 attempted presidential assassination.

Health plan options are identical to those available throughout the government but eligible agents do receive a slightly more favorable retirement benefit.

Most federal employees never will feel the exhilaration of Secret Service experience but the idea of accountability in all levels of federal service is catching. All of bureaucratic Washington can take a lesson from the Secret Service. ■

I AM  
NOT  
TO BLAME!



Nal

months I did get rid of him. It had a salutary effect on the rest of the branch. But I'd sure hate to go through it all again. And I wouldn't unless somebody was guilty of homicide or treason."

Another incident was relayed to a friend of mine by an executive secretary to the Secretary of Commerce during the Johnson Administration. "J. knew how much grief it was to actually fire somebody so he looked

#### ***It is time for a much larger test of merit pay principles.***

around for an alternative. It occurred to him the Weather Bureau was a component of Commerce. The Weather Bureau operated some kind of iceberg observation station on the north coast of Greenland. And so J. called in the offending employee and handed him a handful of papers ordering him to report for service up there in the land of eternal snow. The employee looked over the order in disbelief, then blurted out his resignation. Mission accomplished, J. erased the victim's name from the orders and put them back in his drawer for the next suitable occasion. The word got around quick and there were no further suitable occasions."

I understand that in recent years new barriers have been erected against 'punitive transfers' by managers so maybe even this can't be done anymore.

It is time high-level government managers demanded a policy which permits you to fire at least some of your underlings who won't or can't get the job done. I am convinced the "Turkish Civil Service System" would produce a dramatic improvement in agency efficiency and I strongly suspect it would do so with very few actual firings. For I do not believe the government is loaded with people who are inherently incompetent or lazy. The problem lies with the system. Change it. Once you've done so, I believe the new incentive structure would make real producers out of many of your non-producers.

#### **Merit pay**

In that same vein, it is time for supervisors and executives to push forward with a workable merit pay plan. I am

the first to recognize merit pay measures may be easier to advocate than implement. There are difficult questions about who is really displaying merit on the job and who should be making awards decisions. We all have heard stories about merit pay boards which ended up distributing the extra pay among their own members. Nonetheless, it is time for a much larger test of merit pay principles.

#### **Streamline your maze**

Finally, one obvious way to minimize problems in the present system is to diminish its size, scope and activity. Members of the civil service usually do not think kindly of that proposal. "Contracting out" is a dirty word in every agency because it means fewer jobs for bureaucrats and reduced memberships (and dues) for employee unions. Managers who object, however, owe it to the taxpayer to find other methods which address the cost and efficiency problems which make contracting look good. Contrary to the attitude of some within it, government service is not designed to be a permanent program for the relief of unemployment.

Career officials who quietly agree with this attitude do the system and its members a disservice. Innovative managers recognize there is a job to be done, and it is their duty to get it done with maximum efficiency. Naturally, this challenge raises the question of alternatives to in-house performance of functions or tasks routinely carried out by commercial organizations.

Open-minded managers can attack this problem via OMB Circular A-76, "Performance of Commercial Activi-

ties." Under A-76, jobs falling into a wide range of commercial-type activities can be awarded to the most efficient producer, public or private. This tool supports managers who seek the least-cost method for getting jobs done. If one's agency can perform the task more efficiently than a private firm, the job stays in-house. If not, it's contracted out. There's something about this plan which should please managers.

The threat of losing business to a private sector firm can have highly salutary impact on your employees. Has the A-76 program had this effect? Defense says contracting has proven to be its most effective cost-cutting program. National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration reports saving \$15 for each dollar spent administering A-76. But the program has yet to have its maximum impact. As former Office of Management and Budget A-76 manager Bill Russell says, "The story of OMB Circular A-76, up to the present, is not a happy one. It is a story filled with good intentions, great promise of benefits to the nation, the private sector and the taxpayer—but very limited results. It demonstrates all the difficulties involved in making a constructive change in a large bureaucracy: the resistance of those who feel threatened, the inertia which protects the status quo and the inevitable political influence of a small but vocal minority."

That's not surprising. Any reform encounters obstacles. Can these obstacles be swept away? Yes.

The National Academy of Public Administration's recent report, "Revitalizing Federal Management," actively promotes A-76 procedures, more

SOMETIMES I FEEL  
I AM NOT BEING  
SUFFICIENTLY  
APPALLED!



training and technical assistance to agencies and establishment of a clearinghouse for successful case studies. Those are recommendations which deserve to be pursued by managers.

#### Rules change

I urge federal supervisors and managers to consider these four principles: restraint in arbitrary enforcement, limited authority to fire, new incentives for meritorious performance and competition by private contractors. You'll accomplish wonders for the performance of today's civil service. These are fairly radical changes in the rules under which your "civil service survival game" is played. They would disrupt thousands of individual calculations about the most "trouble-free" path to success as a government employee. But in the long run I think it would be better not only for the country and non-public service taxpayers, but also for government managers and employees.

---

**Allow every bureau chief to cut up to 10 percent of his or her subordinates and replace them with qualified persons of his or her choosing.**

---

Changing the ground rules would give conscientious government employees new opportunities to succeed. It would not let a "goof-off minority" fix the norms for everyone on your teams. It would encourage a healthier view of the civil service by taxpayers and enhance the morale and the sense of worth among your fellow workers in government.

Adlai Stevenson once said, "There are no gains without pains." The foregoing path promises pain, but also gains. To choose not to take it, to go on wallowing in complacency, invites even more pain further down the road.

Orwell's dread vision may not be upon us, but that is not a sufficient reason to relax in your determination to make today's civil service better and more productive. Reforms advocated by government managers themselves, reforms based on merit, productivity and accountability, will make our civil service the standard for the world. ■

# PROTECTING THE PUBLIC

By Stephen L. Atlas

Faceless inaccessible government bureaucracies, feared by many futurists, are not a reality at today's Internal Revenue Service (IRS), claims agency ombudsman George O'Hanlon, head of its Problem Resolution Program (PRP).

Nor should citizens feel they have no place to turn when they need help getting information, for which they have a valid need, filed away at the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), says Thomas Bresson, Deputy Assistant Director of the FBI's Records Management Division. Both IRS and FBI contain special staffs to expedite legitimate citizen requests.

IRS has a special staff of employees whose primary function is to help the citizen and taxpayer resolve problems when normal channels don't work. Motivating such employees clearly requires an atypical management style.

"At IRS," says O'Hanlon, "the only way my staffers can solve these problems is if they are accountable to the organization's policy head. They can't view their jobs as being vulnerable to every division chief in IRS and expect to correct problems within the system. When I make recommendations, they are heard because I account directly to the Commissioner. And out in the field, our problem resolution officers account to their district directors. So we're able to cut across organizational lines to address problems even at upper-management levels."

While the ombudsmen and some of the officers are supervisors, most are not. However, the ombudsman and most of the problem resolution officers are classified "General Managers" (GM-13s) and their monetary incentives are received through merit pay awards.

Problem resolution officers quickly become experts in all phases of the IRS system. As front-line employees, they see results of their efforts quickly—a type of feedback denied most IRS employees who work in specialized areas. In addition to bonuses, other incentives include letters of appreciation from the district director.



All problem resolution officers are members of their directors' immediate staffs.

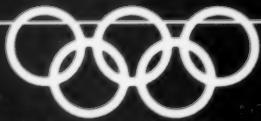
In one case, IRS troubleshooters resolved a problem involving W-2 forms filed by employers for people who claimed never to have worked in those jobs. Under the old rules, IRS expected the alleged employee to pay additional tax or prove he or she never held such work. However, as a result of a problem resolution officer's recommendation the old rule was recently changed and employers now bear the burden of proof.

#### FBI

While IRS relies on a single problem-solver in most districts, FBI's Freedom of Information Office (FOI) has several teams of analysts ("miscellaneous document examiners") led by team captains. Employees in FOI must use considerable judgment when determining whether the agency may withhold a particular piece of information.

In some cases, an FOI examiner determines a piece of information should be released, even though the FBI unit handling the original investigation opposes this decision. In such cases, Bresson tells **Management**, "Our supervisors stick to their guns and follow challenges all the way up through the chain where they make their cases to upper management. If we've done our homework, our original decision is affirmed." ■

# FIT FOR COMPETITION



*Management's Team at  
MSPB Hearings*



*OPM's Sharon M. Shaffer  
and AAU's Mr. D.C. Larry  
Hahula*

## By Tierney R. Bates

Molly is tired of Ralph taking home the office's personal computer (PC) without permission and, like other gutsy managers, has decided to challenge rather than ignore the misconduct.

Preparing to defeat employee misconduct and poor performance are goals today's competitive, production-oriented federal managers, "olympians," are tackling. Just as athletes in last summer's Olympics spent hours in training to assure top performances, federal olympians going before the Merit Systems Protection Board (MSPB) to face employees who appeal agency actions must prepare carefully for the contest.

### First hurdles

Federal managers who need to discipline their employees should talk first to the "coaching" staffs at their agencies. These employee relations specialists, personnel officials and attorneys help managers take and defend warranted personnel actions against employees whose behavior is disrupting office productivity.

As with athletes who compete only in their strongest events, wise managers should choose an employee discipline which will hold up during an MSPB hearing. When a disciplinary action is well-documented and followed by a good showing before the MSPB, the agency—and the supervisor—should triumph in the appeals competition.

By selecting the right discipline strategy—adverse action, performance-based action or reduction-in-grade—managers will be more "fit for competition" should their employees appeal to MSPB.

Managers such as Molly also can get no-nonsense coaching advice from a new OPM text, *Representing the Agency Before the United States Merit Systems Protection Board*. Co-authors Harold Ashner and William Jackson explain the role and power limits of the Board, how to be an effective witness and how to document misconduct and poor performance. Although the book is intended primarily for personnel officials, lawyers and agency reps, other federal managers also should use this valuable "player's manual."

In the hypothetical case, Molly talks with an employee relations specialist

and decides to suspend Ralph (an adverse action) for 30 days.

She sends Ralph a formal letter describing his misconduct (repeatedly removing the PC without permission) and the result of leaving the office computerless. Molly's letter also indicates she has listened to Ralph's side of the story before deciding on the suspension action.

Ralph's written response falls flat. "I needed the PC to update a client mailing list for my after-hours business and had no other reasonable option," writes Ralph. Sales were sinking because a friend (along with his PC) moved to Maine. Ralph didn't ask permission for fear of being turned down. Molly has a record of weekends Ralph took the PC home and then called in sick Monday, leaving the office without a computer. Ralph ignored a written reprimand and several oral requests not to take the computer home. The agency official reviewing the case rules in favor of the 30-day suspension. A week later, Molly learns Ralph is planning to appeal this decision to the MSPB. How can Molly "train" for a best-effort shot at victory in the legal competition?

### Going for the agency gold

Now for some dramatics. Even well-trained olympians entering the MSPB arena may prove overmatched if they haven't rehearsed for the pressure of actual competition. Being familiar with potential testimony and evidence, say Ashner and Jackson, "will make for a smoother delivery at the hearing...and relax the witness." A witness' courtroom demeanor also is vital to management's chances against the employee challenger.

Molly realizes, after talking with her advisors and checking *Representing the Agency*, she needs a trial run. She meets with her agency rep to rehearse possible cross-examination questions. They also review questions the agency's own attorney will ask during her testimony for the agency's team. The OPM textbook includes some tips which will increase a witness' ability to score points.

"Avoid a joking or laid-back manner...it is inappropriate in light of the serious nature of the proceedings," warn the authors. "Tell the (unexaggerated) truth...the agency only wants to win cases it deserves to win," and never speculate.

More sound advice: if questioned on pre-hearing coaching, "I was instructed to tell the truth," has a winning ring. Don't argue or show anger during cross-examination and always follow the presiding official's instructions. Never stretch the truth because errors will be uncovered during cross-examination.

The authors provide advice on basic courtroom etiquette: be courteous and testify in a natural and sincere manner, dress neatly in the type of clothes you normally wear to work and speak distinctly and loudly when answering questions.

When selecting agency witnesses the agency rep "should err on the side of inclusion," say Ashner and Jackson. Presiding officials, it turns out, may deny last-minute additions to the witness list.



### Olympic trials

An agency's response to an employee's petition for appeal provides the first opportunity for management to convince the presiding official (usually a regional office attorney employed by MSPB to rule on the case) the personnel action is warranted. Preparing an accurate, well-documented answer to the petition "will help the agency representative frame the issues, develop an adequate record and plan for the hearing," say authors Ashner and Jackson. Molly's response, prepared by the agency rep, is sent to the presiding official. Specific facts about Ralph's misconduct are included, refuting his reasons for taking the PC home. *Representing the Agency* lists

basic items which must be in the agency reply such as the name, address and phone number of the designated agency rep and all documents in the agency record of the case. A successful strategy also will insure the response includes "the agency's reasons for taking the action against the employee, along with sufficient documentation."

According to Ashner and Jackson, "There is no excuse for waiting until an action is formally proposed, or worse yet, until an appeal is filed, to try to develop documentation which should have been developed at an earlier stage."

*Representing the Agency* lists 11 ways to document misconduct which include tallying the employee's leave, collecting written statements from co-workers and checking records of past disciplinary actions.

To support Ralph's suspension, the federal olympian must prove three points: he has taken the equipment home, a connection exists between the computer's absence and office efficiency and the penalty (suspension) is reasonable.



The authors also describe steps to take when handling other types of appeals such as performance-based and reduction-in-force actions. They recommend reviewing precedent-setting MSPB decisions, which are available from the Board. *Representing the Agency* includes an appendix of sample cases in which agency decisions have been supported by MSPB. The OPM book also lays out some basic rules for first-timers: MSPB hearing format, witness rights and obligations, methods used to determine a witness' credibility, how the presiding official uses rules of evidence and a glossary of legal and personnel terms.

### Feelin' strong now

Molly triumphs during the MSPB hearing and Ralph is suspended for 30 days. Pre-hearing "training" prepped her for excellent performance in the legal competition and both she and the agency have come out winners. But even when an agency team supports its personnel action with accurate and specific documentation and well-prepared, credible witnesses, an employee can still win by proving "harmful" procedural error, prohibited personnel practice (i.e., discrimination, reprisal for whistle-blowing) or a very broad, little-used category of "not in accordance with law."

Olympians can avoid being "disqualified" for these reasons by talking with agency experts, referring to *Representing the Agency* and reviewing previous MSPB cases.

Gutsy federal managers such as Molly help defeat inefficiency in the federal government by challenging employee misconduct and poor performance. They do a service for all supervisors because word of their victories will spread throughout the federal system. By entering the MSPB appeals arena fit for competition, a manager can score not only a personal win but an honest gold for management's team. ■

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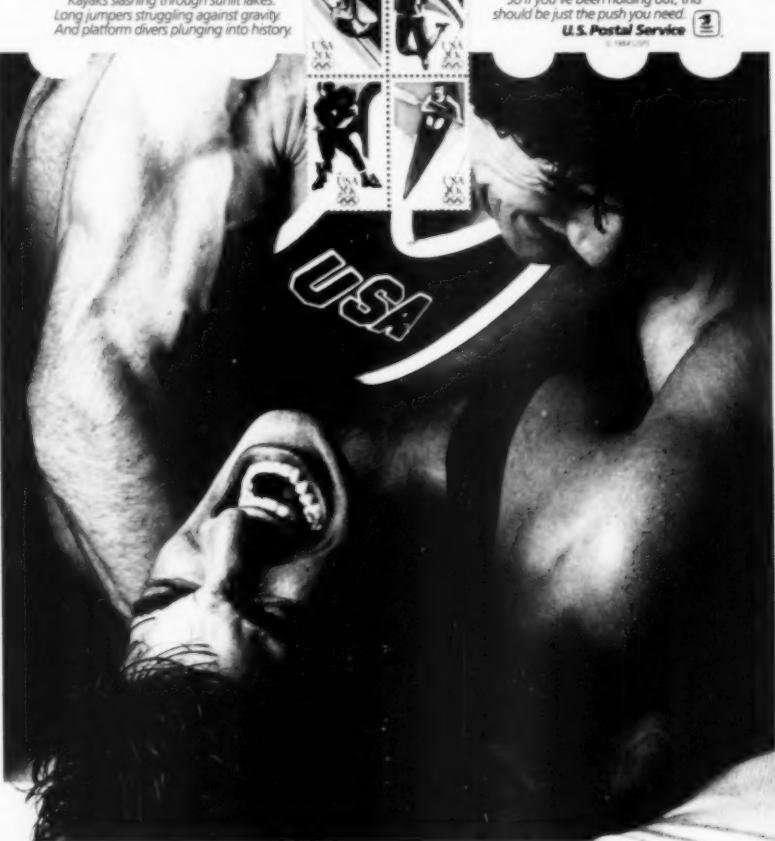
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U.S. Postal Service



# WORLDLY WAYS

**T**hatcher's proposition. A courting offer of 1,000 pounds per employee has led 90 percent of the unionized workers at a government security post near Cheltenham, England, to tear up their guild membership cards. Prime Minister Thatcher's decision to disband the public sector trade guild was appealed by union leadership. "She's been high-handed," said union sympathizers and they called a one-day strike. But an appeals court supported Mrs. Thatcher's action. A British Embassy official tells **Management**, "Mrs. Thatcher is delighted with the affair's final outcome." There's no union at the Cheltenham post and the lively term "Thatcher's proposition" has entered the arcane lexicon of management/labor relations.



**C**anada clubs lifers. Canadian civil servants, "the highest paid in the world," are in for some reviewing by their new government, according to *Wall Street Journal*. These workers enjoy life-long tenure, high salaries (Deputy ministers earn \$80,000-\$100,000 and senior execs, \$60,000-\$85,000), fringe benefits which equal or exceed those in the U.S. and pensions at age 55 which are fully indexed to inflation. "Bureaucrat bashing has become Canada's second most popular indoor sport," says the *Journal*, as non-guvies who lose jobs watch "grade upcreep" taking place in government.

**C**riticism from home-town sources also has Canadian execs on edge. The *Toronto Star* claims "Canadian managers are lousy." An annual **European Management Forum** survey of 22 western countries rates Canadian managers mediocre. "It's decidedly worrisome," reports the *Star*. Rated on performance in ten categories, Canada placed 19th in "managerial drive and entrepreneurship" and 15th in "innovativeness." The Forum study found "incomparably better managers" are in Sweden where take-home pay averages \$12,969 for managers.



**T**op hat public service. Workers at the **World Bank** and **International Monetary Fund (IMF)** are living high on the hog, reports the *New York Times*, enjoying subsidized mortgages, golf and tennis privileges at a **Potomac, Maryland**, country club, private school allowances, discount parking and subsidized meals in spiffy in-house restaurants. As for salaries, about 500 of the Bank's employees earn more than **Supreme Court Justices** (over \$67,500). Recently, the Bank asked for a five percent raise for its workers. IMF may follow suit. The request infuriated **Treasury Secretary Donald Regan** who has reminded Congress the U.S. supplies a lion's share of Bank funding. Defending the higher wages, the Bank's **Staff Association President Damian von Stauffenberg** says denying a pay raise will "have a demoralizing impact" on employees.



**S**hifting economic sands in the land of Lawrence have led to privatizing more construction projects. Saudi Arabia has only losses to show for the \$250 billion poured into state-run projects over the past decade. "Jeddah authorities are eager to shift decision-making for economic growth to its private sector," reports *Business Month*, and as a first step are selling public shares of **Saudi Basic Industries Corporation** and **Petromin**. Authorities also allow private contractors to manage formerly state-run industries. Rejecting the managerial approaches popular in petroleum-rich socialist nations, the Saudis boast private entrepreneurs already account for 56 percent of the nation's gross national product.

**B**onn boom. Since 1960, German civil servants have increased their work force by 80 percent, says a study by **Rolf Kroker** in Bonn. Germany's "overall number of jobs diminished" during the same period, while the public sector rose from 11 to 21 percent of the total market.

**F**eds abroad. Office of Personnel Management (OPM) trainers have crossed the Atlantic and opened a European training headquarters in Darmstadt, Germany. The center serves the 160,000 U.S. feds (civilian) stationed in Western Europe. "Day students" from locations such as Italy, Greece and Scotland now choose from the same list of OPM-sponsored personnel management courses available to their colleagues in America, and Uncle Sam saves on trans-Atlantic fares. The Darmstadt headquarters, near Frankfort, uses locals and imported OPM instructors.



**D**iplomatic strike in Israel. Employees at Israeli embassies worldwide held three-day strikes last summer demanding higher wages and fringe benefits. An official at the **Israeli Embassy in Washington, D.C.**, tells *Management* striking workers returned to their posts. No word yet on firings.

**E**l peso—Viva Ole! Mexico hopes to slow inflation by holding the line against union demands for higher wages. As part of its "austerity" program the government approved a 20 percent increase in the country's minimum salary—rather than the 40 percent hike sought by unions. "The government is holding down wage increases to quiet fears it will far exceed its 1984 inflation targets and further devalue the Mexican peso," reports *Wall Street Journal*. While public sector workers are discontented with the inflation-cutting agenda, foreign creditors are impressed and now offer better deals on Mexico's long-term debts.

# A MESSAGE TO FEDERAL MANAGERS

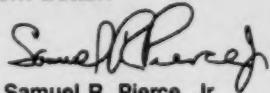


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# Management Activities Standard

## Work Plan

### SES

#### Director of Personnel

**General Responsibilities:** Direct agency central personnel office policy and operations, including labor/management relations, staffing, Equal Employment Opportunity, performance appraisal and merit pay, classification and evaluation.

#### Objectives/Results

- Serve as principal advisor to agency head on all personnel matters, providing prompt, effective advice to top officials of agency. (*Continuing*)
- Maintain up-to-date automated information system to assist managers in administration of staffing program, performance appraisal, retirement, merit pay, EEO, and other personnel programs. (*Continuing*)
- Modify merit pay plan to give managers more discretion in making merit pay determinations. Recommendations to agency head by June 1, 1984.
- Develop plan to integrate incentive awards and minimize imbalances by grade level and organization. Recommendations to agency head by August 2, 1984.
- Negotiate central office contract with ABCD local 00. August 20, 1984.
- Recommend initiatives to improve agencywide commitment to Equal Employment Opportunity and result in improved representation and upward-mobility for women and minority group members. Recommendations to agency head, August 31, 1984.
- Ensure that organization's positions are structured for effective mission accomplishment. Classification review report/recommendations to agency head, October 1, 1984.
- Reduce average processing time from current average to 00 days per personnel action. October 1, 1984.

**ACCOUNTABILITY FOR RESULTS:** At the end of the appraisal period, the record of progress reviews will provide a measure of goal achievement:

Manager met work plan objectives.....   
Manager failed to meet work plan objectives ..   
Manager exceeded work plan objectives ..

## Critical Elements

### Organizational Planning

Determines goals and objectives. Develops policies and procedures. Assigns priorities. Develops specific program plans and milestones. Establishes budget and resource allocations.

Rating

### Program Direction and Communication

Articulates and communicates agency goals in terms of specific program outcomes. Maintains internal and external communications. Directs a management system, including a performance appraisal system, for meeting organizational goals. Makes decisions to facilitate program accomplishment. Carries out work responsibilities.

- Does not articulate or communicate in terms of program outcomes.
- Directs programs and processes.
- Frequently makes decisions that affect parties most affected.
- Seldom informs staff or others of decisions.
- Often misses deadlines or fails to meet them.
- Does not keep affected staff informed.
- Programs and projects fail to meet established locations.

Rating

### Human Resources Management

Delegates work and monitors work progress. Motivates employees. Appraises employees. Acts as liaison between staff and higher management. Gives technical advice. Selects, places, develops employees. Manages performance through appropriate rewards and corrective action.

- Assigns duties and responsibilities without sufficient authority or responsibility.
- Does not match employee skills to job requirements.
- Does not provide staff with feedback during appraisals.
- Does not perform liaison with higher management.
- Does not make appropriate use of authority.
- Does not appraise employees in timely frames.
- Does not use appropriate reward and corrective actions.
- Does not use training and development effectively.

Rating

### Program Monitoring and Evaluation

Develops procedures and guidelines to review program quality and progress. Uses monitoring procedures to review quality and progress. Revises programs as needed, based on review results. Revises monitoring procedures as required.

Rating

- Does not develop procedures to review quality and progress. If such procedures exist, they do not identify problems.
- Projects are frequently late.
- Reports and projects have errors due to careless review.

Summary  
Rating

Method:

# Standard Used With a Work Plan

## Standards

### Fully Successful

- Sets long and short-term program objectives that are realistic and are responsive to agency goals and priorities.
- Develops effective approaches for meeting agency objectives.
- Financial and technical aspects of program plans include analysis of cost to achieve goals.
- Plans specific milestones to permit successful monitoring and control of program activities.
- Prepares budgets that are realistic and attainable.
- Uses cost control techniques effectively.

### Exceeds Fully Successful

- Develops financial and technical plans that have potential for increased effectiveness in achieving agency goals.
- Sets organizational objectives that include potential cost efficiencies (e.g., fewer staff years, less travel, etc.) with documented consideration of impact on programs and other units.
- Provides leadership in cost-conscious budgeting practices.
- Develops innovative approaches to further agency mission and objectives.

### Inadequate

to convey organizational priorities. Developed with little attention to meet minimum guidelines. Supervisory guidance and review.

or communicate agency goals positively. Program outcomes and projects haphazardly. Decisions without consulting those involved. Staff or solicits staff input on issues. Lines for reasons unacceptable to selected organizations informed. Effects frequently exceed budget allowed.

responsibilities without assuring resources to carry them out effectively. Assigns employees to appropriate jobs. Staff with periodic assessment of performance appraisal cycle. Liaison between staff and higher appropriate use of delegation of employees accurately within agency appropriate rewards or take corrective action when resources available.

procedures for monitoring and procedures exist, does not use them consistently. Late without acceptable reasons. Staff have frequent inaccuracies due

- Articulates and communicates agency goals, relating them to achievement of specific program outcomes.
- Meets organizational goals on time and within budget allocations.
- Ensures that organization structure facilitates program accomplishment.
- Determines that accounting and administrative controls achieve cost efficiency.
- Makes logical decisions that are understood and supported by those who are to carry them out.
- Keeps staff and other organizations informed about significant matters in a timely manner.
- Develops and maintains good working relationships with other organizations.
- Provides practical advice and guidance to others (including other organizations) for developing new policies and programs.

- Consistently meets all factors in the fully successful standard in a manner that results in demonstrably significant achievements in meeting agency goals and accomplishing program results.
- Makes extra effort to improve service and increase productivity and effectiveness.
- Resolves difficult or long-standing organizational problems, implements innovative approaches and identifies creative ideas for management review.
- Uses a management system that is effective in early identification and resolution of problems.
- Produces program results which demonstrate improvements in cost-effectiveness, timeliness and quality.

- Tells employees what is expected, advises them of necessary changes as job progresses and holds them responsible for timely completion of work assignments.
- Provides staff with continuous feedback on strengths and weaknesses of their work.
- Appraises staff performance accurately within agency time frames.
- Gives technical advice as required and reviews work promptly.
- Applies EEO and affirmative action principles to employee management.
- Uses appropriate rewards and corrective action principles in employee management.

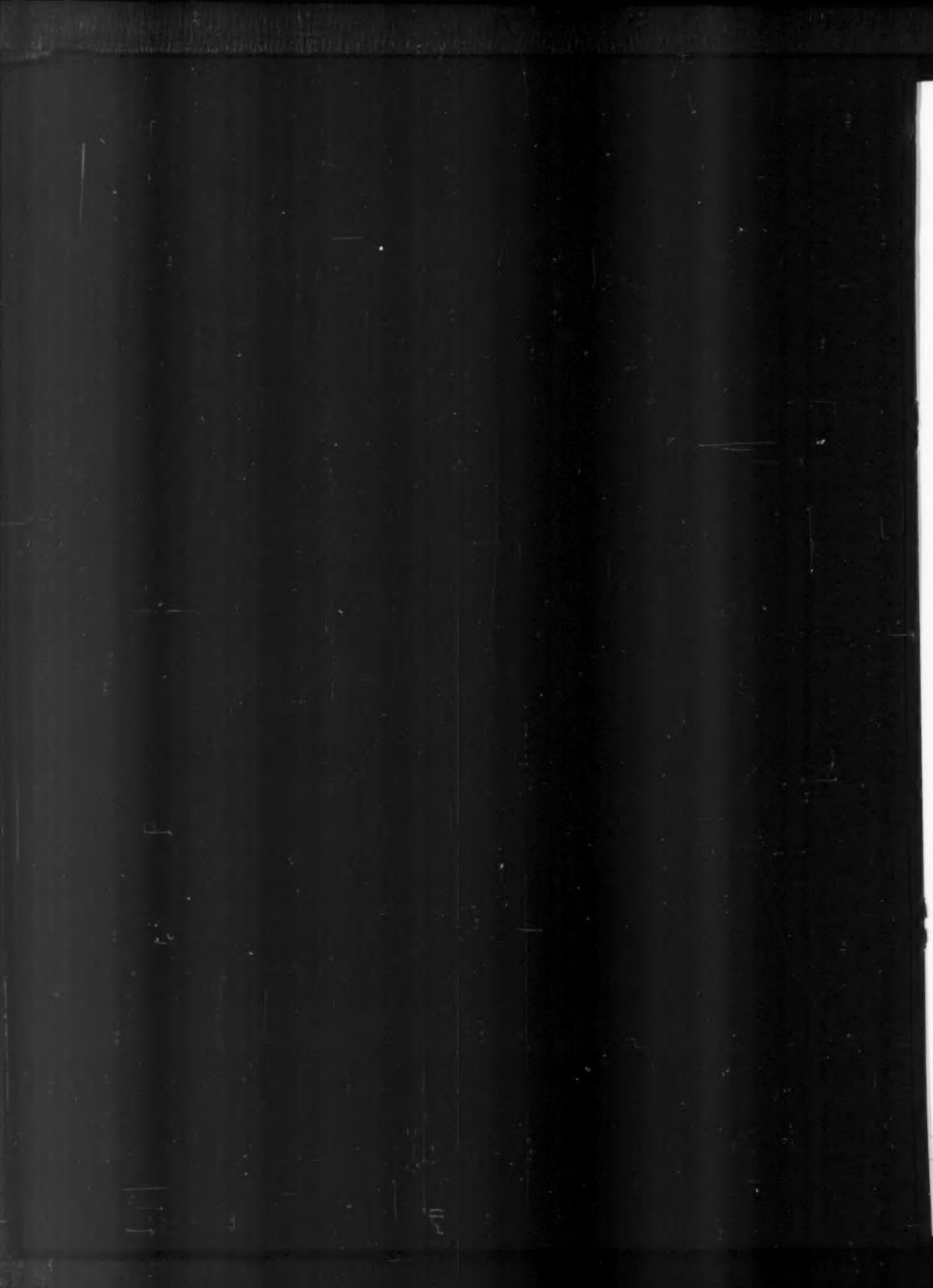
- Successfully decentralizes responsibility, giving staff opportunity for meaningful role in accomplishing organizational objectives.
- Makes special efforts to help employees improve their performance.
- Promptly (and effectively) recognizes accomplishments of subordinates.
- Takes quick, consistent action to remove poor performers.
- Uses available training resources to provide both individual development for staff and increased effectiveness for the organization.

- Determines that review/monitoring procedures and guidelines are clearly and concisely stated.
- Uses monitoring and evaluation procedures which ensure that outputs are of good quality and on time.
- Recognizes when current review is inadequate and makes appropriate changes.

- Actively involves staff and/or users in developing review plans.
- Anticipates situations where assistance or changes in direction will be necessary.
- Uses reviews to identify new approaches that will accomplish work more quickly or effectively.
- Frequently suggests creative improvements to review plans.

A work plan is prepared at the beginning of the appraisal period. At the end of the appraisal period, the record of progress reviews will provide a measure of whether the manager met, failed to meet, or exceeded the work plan objectives. The quality of the manager's

performance can be evaluated by assessing how well management activities were carried out in comparison with generic standards established for those activities.



Here's how the generic standards might be applied in two other scenarios. A supervisory computer systems analyst for the State Department has been charged with computerizing all passport application records (a work plan objective). His deadline is June 20 (time specific). The assignment is something he can really sink his teeth into and it will be a real help to his superiors.



At Interior, a different manager faces an all-too-typical problem. A National Park Service purchasing agent, for example, can't pin down her boss regarding specific job expectations. Using the new standard, her new boss has assigned her responsibility for selecting equipment to be used to improve existing national parks. She, too, has been given a very tough deadline but at least she knows what's expected and when. If her employees accomplish the task she'll be eligible for a bonus.

Upper management should solicit a supervisor's suggestions concerning appropriate objectives and timetables for meeting goals. But the boss will make ultimate decisions concerning exactly which projects go into your work plan. Both parties periodically discuss progress on completing the work plan. During these reviews the superior official will give feedback on a manager's work.

At the end of the appraisal period a record of these mini-reviews should help the appraiser clarify which objectives have been accomplished. Did you meet, fail to meet or exceed the objectives?

And these work plans are very flexible—new assignments and new of-

fice priorities should be added to the standards. They are easy to revise. Simply make sure a work plan is based on specific, actual assignments.

Rather than vague personality traits such as "good team player" or "dependable," real goals form the basis for your evaluation.

#### Main course

Part two of the new management standard guide contains four "generic" critical elements for managers. These can be used to evaluate any manager from SES chiefs to first-line bosses. They include: organizational planning, program direction and communication, human resources management, and program monitoring and evaluation.

Performance standards for each element are spelled out at three levels: unsatisfactory, fully successful and exceeds fully successful (please see chart). These general descriptions should help anxious managers understand what is required to join the club of successful managers.

Lee Treese, who helped develop the guide and who numbers a very successful tenure as editor of **Management** among her career highlights, explains how a manager uses the management standard. "First of all," says Treese "tailor it to meet your organization's needs. Use the general

criteria closest to the job you're evaluating—delete the rest. And add some. The most helpful aspect of the guide is it can be used by upper management to standardize criteria for appropriate jobs throughout an organization.

"When rating time comes you use the general standard in combination with notes about the employee's specific work assignments which you've kept throughout the year. As for rating the elements, ask yourself two questions:

- What descriptions in the general standard characterize the employee's level of performance?
- What specific work accomplishments (or failures) illustrate or document the general assessment?

Using the general standard gives you guidelines for evaluating overall performance while focusing on an employee's work in a very specific way."

#### A toast to the club

Increasingly, the federal personnel system is helping managers like Larry understand how to join "The Club." When mid-managers understand what's expected from them their agencies become more productive. The management activities standard is helping supervisors comprehend their roles better and is available from your agency's personnel office. ■



**UNDER NEW  
MANAGEMENT**

# Civil Service Milestones for Managers

**S**ince 1981, rule changes in the career civil service have improved positions held by managers throughout the federal system.

New measures available to federal managers enable them to effectively fulfill government's drive toward efficiency. These improvements include a broad spectrum of incentives to help supervisors run their offices and motivate employees. In addition, incentives aimed directly at motivating and improving the positions of individual managers also have been adopted.

## Incentives

Incentives which have been proven in private sector firms and in limited experiments in various agencies are being applied throughout the federal managerial system. Management pay increases, bonuses, training revisions and benefit packages figure prominently in these changes. With these incentives, talented leaders are finding it worthwhile to strive for federal executive positions. Like corporate executives, managers are finding work at the top may not get easier but the rewards get better.

President Reagan has taken a variety of executive actions to increase managerial incentives.

**Raises and bonuses.** The upper-level executive managerial salary ceiling is now \$69,600, up from \$50,112 in 1981—a 28 percent increase. Periodic surveys prior to this increase showed upper-level federal executives satisfied with their jobs but unhappy with their salaries. (One of the Presidents' first acts in office was to raise immediately the top salary ceiling from \$50,112 to \$57,500.)

**Salaries for nearly 9,000 supervisors** are now 12.5 percent higher than scheduled wage increases—due to Administration incentives.

**Cash bonuses** of up to 20 percent of salary are now available for 20-30 percent more supervisors.

**Senior Executive Service members**

may now retain pay, awards, retirement and leave benefits while holding Senate-confirmed Presidential appointments. Previously, top GM schedule managers would lose all career benefits whenever they performed job stints as appointees. The Reagan Administration changed SES appointment rules in July, 1983. These managers can now assume greater responsibility without jeopardizing career benefits.

## Performance-based Incentives

The Reagan Administration is implementing merit pay and other performance based incentive measures for more federal employees. Supported by the Federal Managers Association, these management tools are the cornerstone of an effort aimed at helping managers make government offices more productive. Pay-for-performance incentives are the keys to more productive management.

A **Performance Management Training Institute** was created by Office of Personnel Management Director Donald Devine in May 1983. The Institute helps managers and management trainees implement performance-based techniques. Management skills and promotion potential are improved in a classroom setting.

The school, headquartered at 1101 Thomas Circle in Washington, D.C., offers classes worldwide. In 1984, OPM opened a branch of the Institute in West Germany for careerists working abroad. Enrollees' agencies pick up the tab for course tuition.

**Training.** In 1983, over 3,000 agency-specific training sessions were conducted inside client agencies by OPM instructors.

## Managers in courts

The Administration also is backing federal managers in court when their supervisory authorities are called into question.

- The District of Columbia U. S. Dis-

trict Court of Appeals in *Carducci vs. Regan* allowed federal agency managers more personnel-action discretion by sharply curtailing judicial review of discipline cases.

- In *Carroll vs. the Department of Health and Human Services* (1983), the United States Court of Appeals supported management's determination that a supervisor's denial of an employee's within-grade raise does not constitute disparate treatment. The Carroll decision enables federal managers to preserve an important disciplinary tool in personnel management.
- In late 1983, a Washington federal district court upheld several OPM General Counsel arguments stating management has a right to streamline collective bargaining guidelines making labor disputes easier to resolve for all federal managers.

## Opportunities for women

Women are playing a more integral role in every aspect of the federal government—especially management.

**Leadership program.** Accomplishments of women in the federal work force were recognized and encouraged by the Administration when it created the Womens' Executive Leadership Program in March 1984.

A highly skilled core group of women in the GS-9 through GS-12 range are learning the federal management ropes through seminars and training sessions highlighting crucial aspects of management.

**Women who want to move** from full-time to part-time work may now do so during pregnancies or other family-related situations. These women will maintain the opportunity to pursue full-time employment later in their careers.

**Over 8,000 part-time workers**, 70 percent of whom are women, have been hired in the past four years.

**The number of part-time employees** in the GS-11 and above grades has nearly doubled in the past four years. In

1981, the President signed the law enacting the Alternative Work Schedules (AWS) program affecting over 320,000 employees in virtually every government agency. Federal managers may spend more time with families and can fulfill other commitments through the use of flexi-time or alternative work schedules.

**Working mothers**, for instance, who want to return home to meet returning school-aged children can arrive at work earlier and leave earlier by arrangement with their supervisors. Previously experimental, the program was made official policy by President Reagan last year.

**Job sharing**, a recent Administration-endorsed innovation, allows two employees to work part-time on a job traditionally performed by one person on a full-time basis. By arrangement with supervisors, job sharers can divide work among themselves by hours in a day or days in a week. Job sharing teams also can bid on promotions—with each job sharer considered on an individual basis.

### Opportunities for vets

Personnel opportunities for qualified veterans in the federal government have been significantly improved since 1981.

**Over 73,000 veterans** were hired in the last fiscal year alone.

**Nearly 16,000 disabled veterans** have been hired since 1981. In 1981, 4,000 disabled veterans were hired, exceeding the previous record high of 2,367 by nearly 58 percent.

**Viet Vets.** Approximately 215,000 veterans found jobs through the Veterans Readjustment Act (VRA) between October 1981, and September 1982. Through VRA, Vietnam veterans land government jobs in special two-year training programs which are outside competitive civil service procedures.

**The President extended VRA** when it lapsed in 1981.

**Grenada.** Early this year, veterans preference was granted to Grenada and Lebanon combat veterans.

**OPM made changes** (1981) in the Presidential Management Intern Pro-

gram to give veterans a better chance in the selection process.

**New Course.** In July 1983, OPM established a new training course—the Veterans Employment Workshop—to help federal managers use VRA and the Disabled Veterans Affirmative Action Program to help veterans get government jobs.

### New benefits

Federal employees' benefits now extend beyond traditional work-place and work-period limitations.

**Overseas.** Federal managers who leave their jobs to accompany husbands or wives on overseas government assignments—civilian or military—can now extend their reinstatement eligibility period to the length of time of their absence from the United States. Federal Personnel Manual revisions in late 1981 eliminated previous three-year maximum reinstatement limits. Reinstatement periods are lengths of time following extended absences in which employees may reclaim jobs.

And there are additional benefits. Until now, when federal managers relocated to take other government jobs their husbands and wives frequently lost health coverage with the move. They can now change enrollment in health plans to retain family coverage—courtesy of new Administration health care regulations. And federal employees' benefits have been expanded in other ways.

**Revised federal employees group life insurance rates** are 8.3 percent lower effective in May 1984. An Administration study revealed life expectancy statistics did not warrant premiums charged to employees in earlier years.

**Mental health coverage.** Federal employees are now covered for catastrophic mental health needs under government health insurance. Director Devine announced insurance companies participating in the Federal Employees Health Benefits (FEHB) plan are now providing the coverage at no extra cost.

**Bigger selection.** As a result of cost-sharing and co-insurance reforms in the FEHB, federal employees now have over 200 health plans from which to shop for their policies.

Better pay, benefits and bonuses are giving federal managers incentives corporate executives have long enjoyed in their work. ■

*Prepared by Malcolm A. Kline.*



# BIG BROTHER REQUISITIONS YOU! *Orwell's Opportunity, Challenge and Floatum*

By Dr. James H. Boren

**C**onventional thinkers assume George Orwell is warning humankind of a drift toward societal insanity. For federal managers, however, Orwell may be issuing a different challenge. I prefer to view 1984 as a challenge to enlist warriors in the "Crusade of 1984." In short, Big Brother needs your help!

I know not what course others may take, but as for me, give me the Crusade of 1984! Let strength be found in ignorance, peace in war and freedom in slavery. And, may Personnel assign me to the Ministry of Truth where I can introduce Borenwords to the Dictionary of Newspeak. Let me go forth as a warrior in the cause of creative nonresponsiveness. Let's profundify simplicity, drivelate pronouncements and slushmentalize celibate concepts.

O mighty Office of Personnel, let me implement those goosalities which will fuzzify marginal thoughts and idiotoxify mushistic policies.

## Words for the age of Orwell

Communications once involved the exchange of ideas and the transfer of information but today it is the image of communication which is important in our society. Ideas are the products of the thinking process and thinking can be dangerous to one's career and disastrous for one's organization. On the other hand, the image of thinking—assuming the posture of the prodigious ponderer—can enhance one's career and project a picture of organizational productivity.



Alfred E. Neuman  
courtesy  
*MAD Magazine*

<sup>1</sup> There are two ways of implementing an error: (1) direct action, which can have a sudden and dangerous impact on the organization or the body politic, and (2) dynamic inaction (doing nothing but doing it with style). Dynamic inaction is the safe way to go. There is a greater graduality in the implementation of the error and the timality stretch muddifies the impact to the point that when the implementation has been completed, no one will be able to determine whether it was mentation. Of course, the Boren Advisory No. 16 comes into play: When a bureaucrat makes a mistake and continues to make it, it usually becomes the new policy.

<sup>2</sup> Vertical mumbling is the multisyllabic and multisyllabatic interfacing of wordalities. Linear mumbling is the translateralization of tonal patterns with the occasional surfacing of a word. Successful mumbling involves maximizing pupillary contact and adherence to the Boren Dictum: If you're going to be a phoney, be sincere about it.

## Prefacial Wordalities

**ab 'struct** (ab 'strəkt), *v.* To destroy an idea, policy or concept by making it so abstract no one, including the abstractor, can understand what is being abstracted. Attorneys and members of the clergy are outstanding abtractors. Abstraction combines the essential qualities of abstraction and destruction.

**at ty 'dawdle** (e tē 'dōd l), *v.* To delay something by placing it in the hands of an attorney. Bureaucrats can postpone any decision or action for at least six months by asking the organization's general counsel for an opinion.

**bac u punc ture** ('bak yū pa(k)chər), *n.* The skillful insertion of a sharp verbal needle or other career-cutting instrument in the back of one bureaucrat by another. Bacupuncture is a highly skilled maneuver and superior to ordinary and clumsily executed back-stabbing. Bacupuncturists rarely leave fingerprints or traceable tracks.

**blad der ate** ('blad ər ət), *v.* To drag out or prolong a meeting until it must be adjourned to accommodate the physical needs of the participants. Bladderation is often used by those in charge of personnel boards and PTA meetings. It is a useful technique in the controlled management of meetings. Bladderators in charge of meetings usually withhold a controversial vote until people will do anything to get out of the room.

**boob i doodle** (boō'bē dūd l), *n.* A specialized type of nonsensical doodle drawn by boobidoodlers during boring staff meetings, professional or technical conferences or committee meetings. Boobidoodles usually reflect the boobiness of the presentations made at the meetings and not the boobiness of the boobidoodler.

**coot le** ('küt l), *n.* The chortle of an old coot.

**driv el ate** ('driv əl ət), *v.* To produce drivel with professional eloquence: to express a stupid thought in the form of a profound statement. (Beginning drivelators usually practice in private until the art is perfected. To a professional bureaucrat there is no sound worse than the grating sound of an inarticulate drivelator. The premature practice of the art can destroy otherwise bright careers.)

The transfer of information also can be a subversive activity. By its very nature, mountains of information demand some type of action if for no other reason than "it is there." It is a basic drive of management that information, like problems, must be delegated. Something must be done with it. And action, of course, often leads to mistakes. The image of information transfer, however, can carry the message of productive endeavor, but it can do so without also carrying the danger of inherent action.

Basic to the image of communication is the Boren concept of Fuzzification. The essence of fuzzification is adjustivity of interpretation. When a manager, for example, establishes a



**feath er head ing** ('fēth ēr 'hed iŋ), *n.* Management overload as expressed in the practice of payrolling more management or senior staff employees than are needed. Featherheading is used to avoid firing people who should be fired but who are retained on the payroll because it is the easy way out of difficult personnel situations. Featherheading is the management level equivalent of featherbedding and is practiced either in the form of "kicking people upstairs," or in what Dr. Lawrence J. Peter calls "the lateral arabesque."

**hall 'jog** ('hol 'jäg), *v.* To move with speed, determination and high visibility through the hallways and corridors of a place of employment. The purpose of halljogging is to impress superiors and associates with the assumed competence and importance of the halljogger. Halljoggers should carry files not briefcases. (Briefcases give the impression that the employee is leaving early.)

**hun ker fy** ('han kər fī), *v.* To mentally crouch... To prepare psychologically to spring in whatever direction may be best for one's career.

**id io toxic** (id ēə 'tak sīk), *adj.* Anything (policy, program, activity) which is toxic or dangerous because of the idiocy on which it is based.

**in ter void** (int ər 'void), *v.* To avoid confrontation. Interface avoidance.

**oops i fy** ('ōps īfī), *v.* To make a minor mistake. Anyone can oopsify but only a nincompoop can nincompoopify.

**ret ro anal y sis** (re tro ə'nal ə sēs), *n.* The analysis of past events for the purpose of finding a scapegoat.

**re tro punt** (re tro 'pənt), *n.* A kickback, as in retropuntal funding. *v.* To kickback cash or other fiscality factors.

**per son nel ag** (pərs n'el əg), *n.* The measurable lag of personnel policies behind management policies relating to programs, productivity, new directions and other important matters. Most managers make policy decisions without input from personnel specialists who must provide the personpower to implement the policies. Personnelag is a measure of the afterthought of weak management.

**slush men tal** ('sləsh 'mēnt l), *adj.* An adjective used to describe sloppymindedness of mushy thinking.

**sput ter ea tion** ('spät ər 'kā shən), *n.* A low-level controversy or altercation in which the participants merely posture and sputter. Sputterations usually develop in the absence of leadership.

**squat tle** (skwät əl), *v.* To pass through a crisis or to survive a difficult situation by "sitting it out." Squatters are nonproductive survivors.

**toad al ity** ('tōd əl ət ə), *n.* A word, action or other expression by which a toady expresses his or her toadiness. Most practitioners of toadal patterns are proficient egoflectors.

These Borenwords are included in the dictionary section of *Fuzzify!*, EPM Books, Box 490, McLean, Virginia

set of objectives, the objectives should be fuzzified. If the objectives are clearly stated there is no maneuvering room. If the objectives are fuzzified by carefully including words or phrases which are subject to multiple interpretation the manager is building for success. First, the goals can be approved quickly because each person participating in the meeting can interpret the goals to mean whatever he or she wants them to mean. Second, regardless of the meandering flow of history, the manager can subsequently interpret whatever has happened to be whatever is best for him or her at that moment because the adjustivity of interpretation was assured by the original fuzzification. Fuzzification guarantees success.

Fuzzification is particularly safe for 1984. When it is difficult to know what Big Brother wants his submissive ones to think or do, the adjustivity of fuzzification assures compliance. The language of submission, Newspeak, can be enriched by vertical and linear mumbling—and by the judicious use of Borenwords which were born of years of experience on Washington's Capitol Hill and in the U.S. Foreign Service. In sharing these words with fellow practitioners of the bureaucratic arts, I do so in the hope they can give a fuller appreciation for the Orwellian floatum of our time. The best ideas of mice and men float to the top of the organizational cesspool and this is the basis for success and survival in 1984. Fight the good fight!



James Boren is a Washington humorist who currently is seeking the highest office in our land. He is running as the Bureaucrats' candidate. His campaign slogan, "I've got what it takes to take what you make," has electrified voters throughout federal office buildings and in neighborhoods on both sides of the Potomac River from Chain Bridge to the Mount Vernon Estate. Publication of this article in no way represents an endorsement of Boren's campaign by this publication.

# Show: Voice Changes

## Digest's New Chief Adieus Biggest Show in Washington

By Malcolm A. Kline

**T**here are only a handful of the rascals but communications chiefs in many federal agencies tend to stand out among their managerial peers. Mix one part journalist, one part G-man and one part manager and you have hybrid execs who can make an impact on news for their respective audiences.

Kenneth Tomlinson, 40, *Reader's Digest*'s new managing editor, knows the challenges facing government news people. From December 1982, through September 1984, he has managed the biggest radio show in the nation's capital—the Voice of America (VOA). As Tomlinson prepared to leave VOA for his new duties, he met with **Management** and offered advice to readers who handle communications jobs. He was eager to

pass along tips on how to run information services and keep government casts and crews performing their roles.

A former newspaper reporter and foreign correspondent, Tomlinson has sought the same journalistic professionalism from his VOA staff which he demanded of his reporters when he was a non-government news director. In a reversal of a current trend, he now plans to use some public sector management methods in his new shop at *Reader's Digest*.

"When I first appeared before VOA managers," recalls Tomlinson, "I said, 'Gang, we're going to have some changes and rebuild this institution. Old-timers get ready. We're going to have to use new contractors and en-

gineers to work updated equipment.' The immediate response was, 'Sure, we know the shop isn't perfect.'

"Of course, they didn't mean it," says Tomlinson. "They were justifiably proud of VOA's traditions. And they immediately began qualifying their willingness to change and defend old torches which had been monumental innovations when introduced years before."

"So, I broadened my audience and made sure they understood I was talking to everyone—not just taking advice from one group. I'd walk around the Voice talking to employees in their own offices where freer discussion was possible. A couple of shop supervisors didn't recognize me and my secretary started getting reports of an unidentified man asking VOA staffers a lot of questions.

"Voice is an old, venerable institution—like the Queen Mary. And like the Queen Mary you can't turn her too fast. Gradually, however, senior engineers began to realize they still could have a place in this program. Senior managers began taking a more detached view of problems and possibilities in their offices." **Management** asked how the first batch of changes came about?

"The defensive line cracked and a working group—usually led by aggressive supervisors—charged through proposing changes in their own areas." One of the earliest and most visible changes which emerged during the Tomlinson period was the introduction of telephone interviews during talk show formats.

"VOA perennials had argued 'sound quality' would be compromised if guests were taped over the phone instead of appearing live at the microphone," recalls Tomlinson. "Over the years this policy devolved into limited guest lists and lifeless programming. Only speakers willing to travel to VOA's Washington facility could appear on VOA shows. Topics were covered in monologues read by one



moderator." The change to telephone interviews was a technique already used in most commercial radio talk shows. Staffers who favored a trade-off—slightly less sound quality for greater program variety—found support with Tomlinson and they prevailed.

"VOA veterans would not accept some of these changes," says Tomlinson. "For certain broadcasts we had to use less tenured careerists to introduce a richer variety of guests. Once we broke through the barrier, however, more people came along. In fact, some great shows were done by people initially opposed to my program changes."

### Sit-down ovation

"The shock waves which Tomlinson's appointment initially sent through VOA were ominous," recalls one insider. "What changes will he make?" and the more often heard 'How can we stop his politicization of our office?' were typical concerns expressed by established managers. Within two months, however, the tide of sentiment among supervisors was up for grabs."

At the end of five months, Larry Leseur, former CBS newsman and a recently retired VOA careerist, was telling *Broadcast Magazine*, "Tomlinson improves morale among employees because he makes the organization more vital." Fears Tomlinson would politicize the communications outfit evaporated in the face of his many solid, positive proposals.

Looking back, Tomlinson says transition periods are best addressed with a strong management style. "It becomes almost as important as one's journalistic instincts," says Tomlinson. "Many ranking public information directors haven't enjoyed the same amount of supervisory experience which top execs in other areas have gained at similar stages in their careers—this can lead to problems." Management asked if public affairs directors should attempt to emulate the "let's clean house" personnel approach which typifies commercial magazine and broadcast management?

"They can't," says Tomlinson. "Any one who tries to change a federal agency by sweeping out personnel is doomed to conflict. Government is different from magazine offices in New York."

"But you do have to act when line

managers publicly oppose you. Transfers of people sometimes are absolutely essential to accomplish change—though it is a power to be used selectively. Wholesale personnel changes done at one time, of course, tend to be destructive."

### Coalition building

"Communications managers," says Tomlinson, "typically are people persons and they do their organizations a favor if they use these skills to develop a cadre of career civil service allies." Tomlinson has nicknamed VOA's cadre, "the Radio Underground."

"A reporter friend of mine in Washington once said, 'Tomlinson, running a journalistic institution under government rules constitutes an unnatural act!' And indeed, I've discovered it is one thing for a communications manager to build majority support for technical and equipment changes, but it's somewhat more difficult to develop support for editorial policy reforms.

"Getting staff support for this second type of management initiative is important," warns Tomlinson. "You only can operate for a short while using a small number of people to accomplish change."

Over the last three years, some Washington public affairs offices are perceived as having lost an opportunity. Such scenarios involve office cynics studiously opting not to grasp or report upon positive developments in their departments. Later these same voices complain loudly about victimization when their agencies' budget axes begin slicing down underutilized programs.

### News or propaganda

"It is the work of a communications employee," says Tomlinson, "to display the dream and goal behind an administrator's change, cut back or a new regulatory policy. Too many communications pros over-identify with their department's traditional expansionist patterns. 'Good news' is not just bigger agencies and new mandates to expand federal activities."

"I would advise my peers in federal communications to turn an agency goal into your own story—promote it, explain your story to the public and display it with all your skills. If communications managers permit their employees to hold back, to produce at reduced levels, then you gradually will

be excluded from top councils in your own agencies. When information campaigns—which communications offices rightly should conduct—are presented in a half-hearted fashion, the public suffers and, of course, so does your office.

"Stop listening to the nay-sayers who raspberry every policy which doesn't match their personal politics or vacation schedules.

"At Voice, my editorial policy guidance faced immensely complex factions. I dealt with people (journalist types) in our newsrooms who wanted to blow the lid off any story. And I faced foreign-service types in editorial positions who strove to seal the lid tightly over controversial items. They're 180 degrees apart.

"Another faction is made up of our language-services folks who come from other countries and they have rich traditions which depart from U.S. government communications policies. A few people in this last group have ideological axes to grind.

"But, all of these men and women have something to contribute which can make Voice programming multi-textured and uniquely thoughtful."

Tomlinson's editorial challenge clearly dwarfs those of most communications managers. His outfit is not a public affairs shop but a journalism operation. His philosophy about merging conflicting factions, however, is helpful anywhere.

"VOA prides itself on being an information service. Preserving the agency's integrity involves a delicate balancing of all office factions. To move your shop into Washington's current policy mainstream you must get your team behind you. To accomplish that, reward and stroke your doers—supervisors who perform with initiative and excel in implementing the changes you've decided upon. Next, keep the majority of your management team intact but on alert. And, of course, transfer the cynics and chronic opponents.

"Finally, VOA management has established awards ceremonies which honor star performers at every level and in every department. Our broadcasters will win awards as will some administrative officers and, in one very important category, small teams can win group awards. This gives everyone in our office direction and a reason to latch their dreams and ideas onto the office's goals."



# Ms. Management



Dear Ms. Management,

Resume fraud runs rampant in corporations, according to a business magazine circulating here at the Interior Department and I'm not surprised. What can public administration personnelists do to keep our system free of the rotten resume infection? I would hope this letter might mobilize a defensive campaign among our ranks before the problem spreads.

Contamination Guard

Dear Membrain,

You may take off your germ mask. Ms. Management has boldly tested our pristine environment and determined Washington is white-lie central. Some of the most creative writers in the world write 171's in government. The federal personnel compliance and investigations folk who monitor this unsavory topic have a survey of 5,200 cases which examines "misleading" info on government employees' resumes. Guess what? Among critically sensitive positions (highly classified jobs with highly educated and experienced applicants) an easy 20 percent of job hopefuls fibbed on key questions. In an aside, OPM's truth mistress assured Ms. Management the fraud figure would have soared to 35 percent if her snoop detector were trained on the more mundane questions as well.

Public administration at non-critical levels fares no better. A spot check by our ladies of the lantern bogged down when 40-45 percent of responses went awry of reality. Little things—like old prison sentences—slip through the grid as the government's finest tackle those always tough-to-type 171 forms. Suffice to say, both private- and public-sector bosses are afoot atime.

FYI: OPM investigators run "suitability surveys" on all top-level jobs. But, if you're worried about an applicant for a non-sensitive position they will work with you to meet managerial decision deadlines. Next month, someone should ask Ms. Management about clearing up those embarrassing boasts which befall the bio's of those most dear.

Ms. Management welcomes inquiries regarding office performance, supervision, and related topics. Please forward your questions to me at the:

Office of Public Affairs  
Room 5F12  
Washington D.C. 20415

Cordially,  
M.M.

IF I HAVE TO CHOOSE BETWEEN A GAFFE AND A FAUX PAS, I'LL CHOOSE A FAUX PAS EVERY TIME!



**Dear Ms. Management,**

A recent postal union brochure urging columnists like myself to support their wage-hike demands has set me off. The press mailing boasted that 89 percent of first-class mail arrives in two days. Why do I too often find my mail in the other 11 percent? Why does it take a letter I mail from California six days to arrive anywhere? Another thing, Ms. Management. Why can't I get my mail delivered to my office—like nearly every other red-blooded business person? When my office was in Rockville, Maryland, mail delivery was peachy. Super great workers, in fact. Now that my office is in a California district, postal powers cannot bring mail to my office. Ms. Management, what should I do? Write Postmaster General Bolger?

*Aim for the Union Postman*

**Dear Miffed Letters,**

Strange place California. Ms. Management's handy moving advice—sought prior to your departure from smart Rockville—might have forestalled your current dilemma. Water under the bridge.

Always on the lookout for surly situations involving public management, we have taken the liberty of forwarding your request to General Bolger. He writes, "My Dear Ms. Management, I have asked the postmaster of your reader's district to look very closely into the charge that delivery in her part of California is erratic. He will advise me if some delivery route adjustment should be undertaken. Please understand her neighborhood is experiencing a high rate of growth and congestion. But that doesn't mean my employees will not make every effort to deliver your reader's mail just as quickly as possible.

"The newslady's office is in a new mini-complex which is subject to the Postal Service's 'Central Delivery Policy.' The 'cluster' mailbox arrangement installed near her office is the result of proper negotiations between the Postal Service and the developer of her office complex. However, letter carriers have been instructed to deliver directly to her office when the mail volume is too great to be accommodated by the cluster receptacle. We also will make this service available to other businesses in the complex. Most sincerely...etc. etc."

One thing guaranteed to get Ms. Management's dander is arbitrary service by a postman or any other "civil" servant. We are delighted to discover method and policy—instead of madness—cropping up in our federal system every now and then (even when we must appeal to gentlemen such as General Bolger to obtain such satisfaction). Next.

**Dear Ms. Management,**

I am seriously annoyed with a smoker in my office. Everytime I turn around she's lighting up. Then, after she has infested my airspace with fumes, she asks if I minded. Is there anything I can do about her type? Strangle her?

*Throw A Lucky Strike*

**Dear Parliament Procedure,**

*A ban on federal smoking has not been passed, although a disability settlement has been made in favor of a non-smoker in one federal office. To date, smoking is not viewed as littering. So prepare to compromise.*

*As a supervisor, you are called upon to wear many hats, including that of the conciliator. You may not go about stamping little "circles with lines through them" over employees.*

*First, examine your feelings. Is the smoke actually restricting a major life function (breathing) or merely upsetting your aesthetic standards? Remember, working with people involves accepting habits and lifestyles in others you wouldn't dream of adopting.*

*Ms. Management suggests you determine the very precise needs of all the persons concerned. Discuss what you as a non-smoker will tolerate and find out which of the many forms of self-restraint Miss Smoker is willing to suffer (agencies may buy air purifiers when requested by supervisors).*

*If your health is at stake, or you face a polarized situation, pair people together in appropriate office space. Grade-level concerns naturally determine which crowd gets moved...no one is entitled to a window seat simply because he or she believes righteousness rides with the non-smoker.*

## Ms. Management



# School of Thought

## SURGERY FOR MID-MANAGEMENT



**O**ur nation's capital city has an unbecoming weight problem. One-third of the salaried positions in Washington are overgraded and the price tag for today's fatty classification procedures—which only cut skin deep into the problem—is nearly a billion dollars a year.

These facts appear in the government's *Report on Federal White Collar Position Classification Accuracy* (March, 1983). Does our Washington establishment tolerate this laxity because the law governing federal salaries (Classification Act of 1949) is viewed as a "suggested" guideline rather than a serious law? Would we tolerate a one-third failure rate in other areas of legal enforcement? Clearly, provisions of the Act are not being enforced by components of the bureaucracy charged with monitoring grade levels permitted in Washington's federal job market.

Overgrading and the ensuing problem of higher salaries spiral into higher fringe benefit costs, greater severance pay and excessive retirement pay. Distortions continue to occur when—in pay comparability studies—federal positions are matched with higher-paying private sector jobs. Overgraded positions create low morale as "favorite children" receive special treatment: the principle of equal pay for work of equal value suffers when grade and pay decisions are based upon management "wish lists" rather than accurate classification standards.

Surgical efforts to cut into layers of Washington fraud, waste and mismanagement often are attempted by individual agencies' offices of inspector general. However, these watch-

By Michael L. Monroe

dogs share the same personal motivations all federal employees embrace and tend to perpetuate overgrading right in their own backyards. Thus, incentive is lacking at the agency level where enforcement of proper classification is most expected.

If these internal guardians are compromised—even subconsciously—few reforms will be forthcoming. The estimated one-third overgrading of salaried positions in the capital area is a natural outcome of complacent self monitoring. The fact that overgrading isn't more widespread is, perhaps, a credit to the strong personal ethics of many individual classifiers. Giving classification authority to the agencies compromises the function: managers practically set their own pay. The system rewards managers who oversee subordinates with high grade levels and thus supervisors have a vested interest in raising their workers' grade levels.

The Civil Service Reform Act of 1978 and the reorganization of the Civil Service Commission diminished the classification inspection function. Budget and staff reductions further have reduced this check on grade inflation. Previously, the inspection threat prompted some moderation by grade-hikers.

The Office of Personnel Management (OPM) and Office of Management and Budget (OMB) have issued stinging denunciations of overgrading. Tallies are kept on average grades, quotas are set for higher-graded positions and anti grade-inflation sermons are published.

Yet, the average grade has increased from 5.4 in 1950 to 8.3 in 1983. In a January 1984, memorandum presenting these statistics, OPM proposed measures to reduce the number of GS/GM grades 11-15 in Fiscal Year 1985.

Increased participation by OMB in overseeing the federal grade structure implies agencies are unable or unwilling to deal with the grade inflation problem. An obvious solution would be to invest one agency with power to keep the lid on grade creep.

By centralizing classification in OPM the function would no longer be viewed as secondary to mission, management or personnel considerations. The Classification Act would be regarded as law rather than merely a guideline. Immediate side effects: agency personnel officers would have less power and OPM would be pressured by agency officials to overgrade certain positions. In addition, OPM would play a major role in approving reorganizations. Top leadership at OPM must be prepared to withstand the onslaught of those eager to hoist themselves up to the highest possible grade levels.

If, as OPM and OMB have documented, overgrading is a serious problem in the federal government then surgery is required to transplant the classification authority from individual agencies into one agency—OPM. Recovery from this overgrading disorder requires a bold approach and giving OPM sole classification authority is one obvious treatment. ■

*Michael Monroe is a federal personnel management specialist at the Department of Housing and Urban Development. Monroe's "School of Thought" column reflects his personal viewpoint.*

# Book Review

## Buried Alive: Managers Not Mummies

*The Conservators.* Elliott Roosevelt. (Arbor House, 416 pages.) As if mocked by gods, the children of utopians either labor to dismantle or to ignore failed policy devices. In Orwell's 1984, the legacy of reformers overwhelms society—succeeding generations despair. Taking a less alarming view, Elliott Roosevelt applies this literary theme to the dry world of federal bureaucracy. He merely chides us for failing to awake from stale dreams.

In *The Conservators*, author Roosevelt—son of America's most experimental and ambitious Chief Executive—scrutinizes government initiatives flowing from the hubris of his Dad's "New Deal," but which may have outlived public usefulness. Distancing himself from the emergency liberalism of old-time reformers, Roosevelt insists federal managers are in the best position to phase down programs for which they technically carry torches but which have long since lost their lusters.

To determine if one's career work supports a remnant policy—Washington's equivalent to a golden oldie—Roosevelt asks federal employees to gauge public apathy toward their work? "There will be," he tells *Management*, "ever-present, tiny advocacy lobbies on the political left which favor maintaining all forms of central government authority. And, of

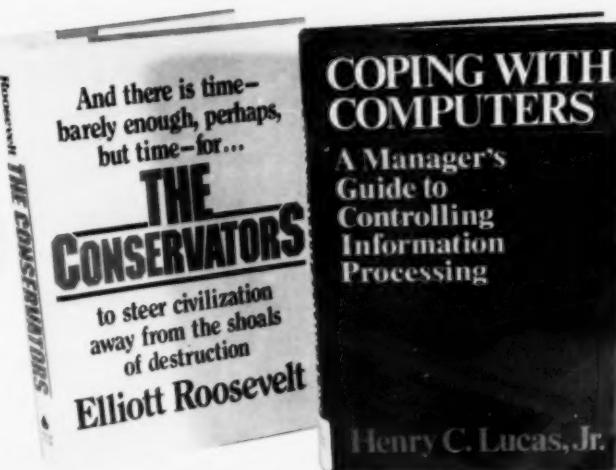
course, there are those few, fortunate businessmen who benefit from vestigial programs. But these must be ignored." Nor should a manager exclusively listen to conservative idealists, says Roosevelt, who typically favor abolishing not only brain-dead agencies, but live, "marginally successful," albeit controversial federal efforts.

Finally, he offers counsel to careerists who recognize their assigned tasks are zombie missions. For example, should energy conservation officials diligently enforce "Drive 55" guidelines? "I know many of you reading this depend on such programs—they are your meal tickets," Roosevelt tells *Management*. "But your duty as a

trustee of democratic government demands you subtly pave the way for legislative remedies. Hire fewer employees—minimizing opportunity for scandal or bureaucratic abuse. And avoid temptations to design make-work policies only peripherally related to your mandated—and outdated—programs.

"Keep your top executives advised about the reality of your daily work—they must know the truth if they are to persuade empowered leaders to phase out useless programs. Most of you," he concludes, "already know how to expand upon a legislative authority. Some of you now must learn to do the same in reverse."

■ D.T.



## Computer Catechism

*Coping with Computers: A Manager's Guide to Controlling Information Processing.* Henry C. Lucas, Jr. (Free Press/MacMillian, 150 pages.) Lucas' honest little book begins with the question asked by prospective converts to any new system, "Why get involved?" He has a frighteningly simple answer for managers, "Learn to control such systems or the technologies will control you and your agency."

In preparing his how-to book, the

author—a professor and department chairman at New York University's graduate business school—clearly draws upon his experience as a private consultant. His format is perfect: short, question/answer chapters.

Office of Personnel Management's Steve Van Rees examined *Coping for Management*. Our reviewer reports Lucas' advice generally is accurate, largely void of mindless ("wave of the future") hype and is ideal for federal

government executives. Although Lucas unabashedly favors new technologies—and would apply them to almost all office situations—he does provide handy models which managers can use to "evolve" conventional organizations into info-processing outfits.

Lucas may not have written a Bible of advice for budding computer experts—but *Coping* does qualify as a handy catechism suitable for the most reluctant converts. ■

# IN A WORD

## Help-wanted

"One of today's great illusions is the government creates jobs. Except for those it hires directly, government creates few permanent jobs. Almost all permanent jobs result from private firms in order to make a profit. A few years ago, the U.S. was described as an economic deadbeat. Growth and productivity increases lagged behind Europe's and Japan's. Now, Europe is agog over the American economy. Little wonder: Between 1974 and 1983, it created nearly 16 million jobs, while Europe lost 1.5 million."

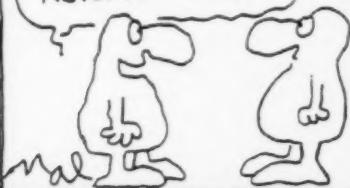
*Robert J. Samuelson, Newsweek*

## Fed RIFs...small potatoes

"Washington is the country's 16th biggest city. Since Reagan took office, there have been 2,900 federal workers who have been fired here—way under one percent. In Baltimore, they lost that many in one day at U.S. Steel. Numerically, the people who got RIFed were mid-level, white males. You can call the cuts political, but again these people were elected to do certain things. The people who got nailed say it was political. A lot of the RIFs were done because budgets were cut by the Congress. But, you go to Detroit and tell them 2,900 people were fired over a three-year period and they'll still be laughing, unless they form an army to march on Washington to burn it. Look at the Washington Star. They have a RIF and boom, 3,000 gone. There was no Rep. Mike Barnes committee—Rep. Steny Hoyer didn't hold any hearings. A taxpayer might call and say, 'You said in a column today the average government worker in Washington makes \$30,640 and government workers are underpaid by 21 percent. My brother-in-law's been working all his life and gets no vacation and doesn't make anything like \$30,000. What the hell are you talking about?' My column is an educational process for people who don't work for the government."

*Mike Causey, Washington Post*

I SPEAK WITH A  
GREAT DEAL MORE  
AUTHORITY THAN I  
ACTUALLY HAVE!



### Baby boomers line-up

"Contrary to much of what has been written about them, the baby boom generation exhibits fundamental attitudes and values which parallel mainstream social and political beliefs of their elders... traditional beliefs that hard work leads to success. The difference between the perceptions of the baby boom generation was more likely exaggerated... It may have described the beliefs and behavior of only a small portion of the generation—the portion most visible and newsworthy."

*Barbara I. Brown, Vice President, Monroe Mendelsohn Research Inc.*

### Get what you pay for

"Americans reading about huge executive paychecks see this as further evidence that managers are rip-off artists. Although it has not been heard much in the media, a serious case has lately been made that our system for paying senior executives of large corporations is quite rational. This view of the top-executive pay process leans heavily on recent research which discovered the deals struck between shareholders and senior managers tend to make sense, with 'making sense' meaning they optimize the risk-reward preferences of both parties."

*Daniel Seligman, Fortune*

### Seniority v. Affirmative Action

Supreme Court backs seniority over minorities hired under affirmative action during layoffs (Firefighters Local Union No. 1784 v. Stotts et al) "It is inappropriate to deny an innocent employee the benefits (of seniority during layoffs)."

*Justice Byron R. White*

"Federal courts cannot impose quotas based upon racial consideration in employment. We have maintained all along quotas are a device for discrimination."

*Attorney General William French Smith*

"It is a far reaching victory for those opposed to the use of racial quotas in the quest for affirmative action, which we fully support."

*Justin Finger, B'nai B'rith*

### British appraisals

"Is a uniform appraisal system (evaluating performance of varied jobs using the same standards) necessarily right? Should Civil Service have greater freedom for variation and experimentation?

"To ensure the use of the most effective appraisal format, the Management and Personnel Office (MPO) would lay down a basic minimum framework of principles which all departments' appraisal systems should meet. But, departments could vary the structure, content, appearance and formats of their forms to suit their own needs... We must insist on schemes which focus the appraisal clearly on performance and targets set at the outset of the year. But we still need to leave freedom for it to be tailored to the circumstances of Rita Brown's work and the management system operating in her office."

*Lord Gowrie, Minister, Management and Personnel Office*

# ANOTHER VIEW

## HELLO LITTLE BROTHER

*Another View: Dr. Walter Williams*

By Malcolm A. Kline

**G**eorge Orwell's 1984. Is it here? Today's federal managers are toddling toward Orwell's Big Brotherhood, according to George Mason University resident economist Dr. Walter Williams.

And quite simply, Williams would like to cut the umbilical cord tying federal managers to "Big Brother."

Management asks Williams to defend his view. His reply may not surprise George Mason students or the estimated 20 million who read his syndicated column but it does provide "Another View" for Management's audience.

As always, this magazine neither endorses nor rejects comments expressed in this controversial column.

For starters, Williams tells Management he has turned down government job offers. He does not envy careerists.

"If I were in the Agriculture Department and told to write laws mandating price fixing which would create artificial farm price supports and freeze competition, I couldn't.

"I would think it immoral, violating every principle of freedom. But if I were to ignore my boss, I would risk being fired.

### Non-trivial pursuit

"No I don't see sinister clandestine plots which are touted by some government critics. But I do see an incentive structure that has to be revised. I think you federal workers are responding to government's incentive structure," he says, "If I were so employed I would too, so I don't blame you."

Williams tells Management federal employees are insulated from rigorous marketplace rewards and punishments.

"Do you believe you serve up one product you are charged with providing? We are spending over \$360 billion a year on federal, state and local government anti-poverty programs. If we just gave money to the poor, each family would get between \$34,000 and \$36,000 a year. If they aren't getting it, and I don't think they are, it must be going to others.

"The anti-poverty programs are expanding, the number of people running them growing and the poor remain just that—poor.

"Take the Department of Interior employees charged with managing national parks as another example. Many of our parks are pigpens. If fewer people, as a result, visit them what happens to those park supervisors? Nothing. They keep their job and may even get a raise, not as a reward for a job well done but as a bonus for surviving.

"I believe you people call it a within-grade increase.

"On the other hand, suppose Disneyland allowed its park to become a pigpen? Fewer people would go to Disneyland bringing in fewer profits. Investors would abandon it on Wall Street and heads would roll at Disneyland. Accountability Disneyland-style does not exist in national parks."

We challenged Williams to suggest a way to increase efficiency in managing national parks.

"I would sell them to the private sector," he says. "Yellowstone and Sequoia National Park would go on the auction block."

### Big Brother on a diet

Williams' gut libertarian response on this point overreaches a finer argument he makes when challenged by his critics. Currently, he believes many government functions, mandated

by Congress, are over-administered.

"In order to own and operate a truck, one should have to prove one can drive a truck, the truck is safe to operate along the highway and liability insurance is provided. How many employes and how much paperwork are needed for such an oversight procedure?

"If this were all that were involved at Interstate Commerce Commission you would not need most of the employes and office space over there and could probably rent out a couple of floors at their headquarters downtown."

If Williams were to place himself in the shoes of a real-world federal executive what steps might he use to reduce government?

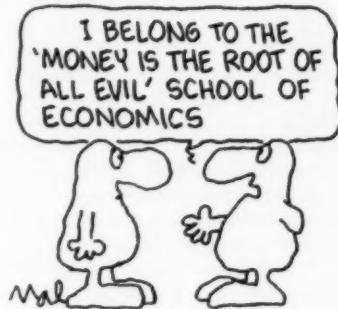
"I think one of the most effective methods," says Williams, "is used by air traffic controllers when they get upset. Controllers can effectively close down an airport just by obeying every single air traffic control regulation.

"If you're running an agency you have to abide by Congressional demands. You just don't have the freedom to close down the agency by writing a sentence or two but can effectively close it down, I believe, just by obeying every single law. In a high-level government position, I might insist on obeying every single regulation associated with my agency bringing it, I would imagine, to a grinding halt."

Williams strongly recommends denying employe unions collective bargaining demands as a cost-cutting tool for federal managers. He believes lobbying by federal workers to further their interests can set back cost-conscious federal managers' government reduction efforts.

"For instance, Government Printing Office (GPO) careerists and political

appointees are trying to streamline. I'm sure they could reduce the number of employees there and make it run more efficiently. If any of them try to streamline too much, however, the printers' union is going to breathe down the neck of Congress' oversight committee. Some committee member is going to phone the cost-conscious GPO administrator and shout, 'Hey, let's back off some!'"



### Corraling colts

Some of the baby-brother syndrome, Williams believes, stems from foolish public demand.

"Not every authority gained by government employees is sought after by the bureaucracy," he says. He points to recent efforts by Baltimore city officials to keep the Baltimore Colts football organization from moving to Indianapolis.

"Local officials are attempting to tell a football team, 'The best interests of Baltimore dictate you not be allowed to move.'

"I can see myself standing at Dulles Airport, ready to move my family when some bureaucrat tells me, 'Williams, for the best interests of Fairfax, you're not free to move to Los Angeles.'

"If this sounds impossible check out moving regulations in countries which 'enjoy' social democratic regimes."

"It's a tiny step towards totalitarianism. As a public servant, you must recognize if you continue to take little steps towards totalitarianism, some day you're going to get there."

### Don't farm out players

Office of Management and Budget officials viewing contracting out government activities as a cost-cutting government reduction measure had best not turn to this economist for moral support. Williams feels A-76 regs insidiously widen the scope of government.

"To a large extent, many private contractors are a mere extension of government. You play trick-or-treat with businesses and private foundations promising them a big bag of goodies while forcing upon them your rules, regulations and enforcement powers."

Miserly financed government is Williams favored approach to decreasing federal powers. But the economist will not totally abandon contracting out approaches if they are cost-effective.

"We should use the cheapest way of producing things. Let Chrysler produce tanks if they can do so more cheaply than a government tank factory."

Williams' caveat: it's better to have a smaller government than a redistributed one.

### Management rights

Williams says personnel action reforms and expanded merit pay should be applied to all occupations—particularly career civil service. He strongly favors introduction of new laws governing the firing of ineffective employees and marginal performers.

Current procedures which make it difficult to fire ineffective employees make it more difficult to hire promising employees. "Because it's very costly and time-consuming to fire employees," Williams says, "you will try to minimize, when you are hiring, the need to fire people. You will pick applicants with long track records and greater experience rather than those who, your gut instincts tell you, would be better workers."

"If you could fire employees easily you would take a chance on promising women and minorities. However, if you're going to pay through the nose and wrap yourself in red tape to fire them you'll say, 'It's going to cost me a lot of money and I'm forced to go through costly procedures to fire them so I'll go with the mediocre but proven turkey.'"

### Keeping "Baby Brother" in diapers

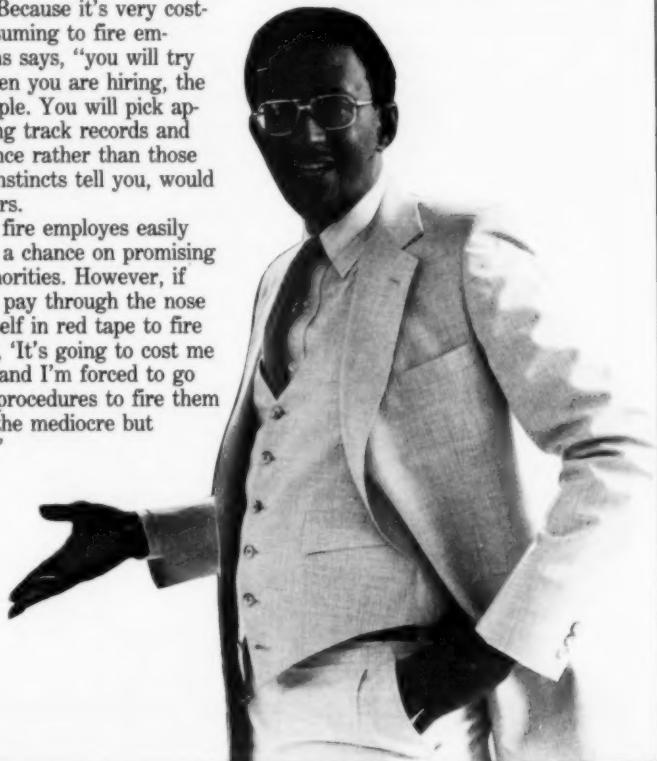
Management asked Dr. Williams if careerists should view him as a natural enemy.

"Anybody working for government, even a congressman, should perhaps view any person who takes a strong stand on individual freedom as his natural opponent."

"I told Senate Labor Committee members they were one of America's big problems. They get and keep their jobs by bartering with other people's property. H. L. Mencken was right saying an election is an advance auction on the sale of stolen property."

"Too much government activity barters with stolen property. Your readers in federal agencies are agents of Congress who take money from one American, give it to another, or give one citizen a privilege denied another. In that sense you may feel your job is threatened by a person like me."

"I've been flattered with very high-level offers," he says, "and I tell people I won't participate. I won't become a receiver of stolen goods. Now, I don't expect your readers to take that same moral position but they need to consider, at least, the possibility they are enforcing unjust laws." ■



## In Brief

# UNION POLITICKING ILLEGAL

By Jo Ann Chabot

**A**ny "hatched" federal worker who participates in a voter registration drive sponsored by a labor union which endorses candidates for public offices is breaking the law, according to the United States District Court. (*AFGE v. O'Connor* D.D.C. June 29, 1984.)

In ruling against the American Federation of Government Employees (AFGE) and the National Treasury Employees Union (NTEU), Judge Thomas Penfield Jackson determined union claims of non-partisanship are not credible if the union actively supports political candidates. Both AFGE and NTEU have endorsed Walter F. Mondale's presidential candidacy. The decision serves as a warning to all labor unions supporting political hopefuls.

Judge Jackson has reaffirmed the 45-year-old Hatch Act which keeps federal employees from grinding their political axes with government money

and resources and protects civil servants from political pressures imposed by labor union representatives or their supervisors.

The court upheld an opinion issued by K. William O'Connor, Special Counsel of the Merit Systems Protection Board. Violation of the Hatch Act may lead to dismissal from federal service. (5 U.S.C. 7325.)

### Look for the union headline

As election day draws near, federal employee labor unions may feel the urge to sponsor drives urging federal employees to "get out and vote." Federal employee participation in these drives might violate the Hatch Act, depending on how the drive is conducted. If a federal employee has any question concerning participation in a "get out and vote" drive, he should contact the Office of the Special Counsel at the U.S. Merit Systems Protection Board.

In response to election-year inquiries about federal employee donations to political action committees (PACs), the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) has issued regulations which make clear the law prohibits government workers from soliciting, receiving or making political contributions in the federal workplace. The ban includes contributions made through payroll deductions. (49 Fed. Reg. 1743, April 24, 1984.)

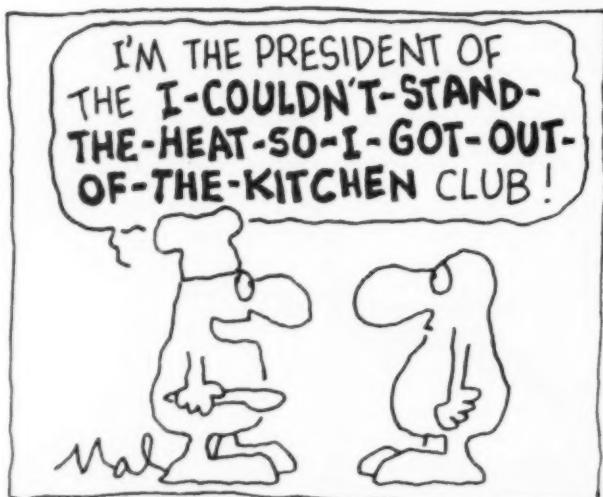
Hatch Act rules are not the only ones which apply to political activity by federal workers. The criminal code prohibits civil servants from soliciting or receiving campaign contributions from co-workers on or off federal property. Violators may be punished with a \$5,000 fine and imprisonment. (18 U.S.C. 602 and 607.)

### Reagan/Bush decline contributions

If you are a federal employee and have contributed to the Reagan/Bush '84 Committee you will receive a thanks-but-no-thanks, along with a refund of your donation.

The polite regret flows from a decision by President Reagan himself after learning of an ambiguity in federal statutes concerning campaign donations. The law prohibits employees of the United States from making political contributions to their "employer or employing authority." Translation: since President Reagan is the boss over the entire Executive Branch he doesn't want his employees to feel pressured to make a campaign contribution. You may contribute to other candidates but not to the incumbent President.

Past presidents received contributions from career civil servants, as well as from political appointees.



# In Brief

President Reagan's decision represents an effort to avoid a murky legal area, as well as to prevent federal employees from being dragged into the political arena by opponents who might charge fund-raising improprieties.

The presidential directive does not prevent spouses and other family members of federal employees from making contributions. Nor does it forbid contributions to party or independent expenditure organizations.

## Badgering political badges

U.S. District Court Judge Harold Greene has ruled federal managers enjoy wide latitude in banning political badges and buttons in government offices but any such restriction must be prudent and not unduly interfere with the exercise of free speech rights. (*AFGE v. Pierce*, D.D.C., June 4, 1984.)

A Veterans Administration (VA) across-the-board ban against wearing campaign buttons by employees overstepped Hatch Act safeguards, according to Judge Greene. The court said VA's restriction was overbroad and beyond the scope of OPM regulations.

An agency may "prohibit or limit the participation of an employee or class of employees" in an activity, but

only "if the activity would interfere with the efficient performance of official duties or create a conflict of interests." For example, an Internal Revenue Service employee ought not to advertise his political leanings during a taxpayer audit. Similarly, garish personal displays may give the impression a federal office supports a particular candidate. They also may disrupt office routines. In such cases, managers may wish to tone down or restrict the offensive activity.



## COURT UPHOLDS OPM AUTHORITY ON LABOR-MANAGEMENT GUIDANCE

By James F. Hicks

The Supreme Court has ruled federal agencies are not required to reimburse the travel expenses and per diem allowances of employees who represent a union in collective bargaining. The Office of Personnel Management (OPM) advised agencies of this ruling in *Federal Personnel Manual (FPM) Letter 711-162*, January 19, 1984.

The National Treasury Employees Union (NTEU) unsuccessfully challenged OPM's guidance. United States District Court Judge Charles Richey has concluded the FPM Letter was consistent with OPM's statutory role as advisor to federal agencies on labor-management issues. OPM's authority does not depend upon the substance of the advice given or the unequivocal language used by OPM to express its opinions in this area. (*NTEU v. Devine* (D.D.C., June 29, 1984). ■

Jo Ann Chabot and James F. Hicks are attorneys in OPM's Office of General Counsel.

# Consultant

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# Managing Taxpayers' Dollars

## MOVES TO CUT LEASING COSTS

By Michael W. Orenstein

**N**early \$2 billion a year in savings will accumulate for taxpayers if federal employees restructure office spaces into configurations designed by a group of budget-conscious officials at the General Services Administration (GSA).

Quite frankly, the efforts by federal managers will spell the difference between success and failure for their measure.

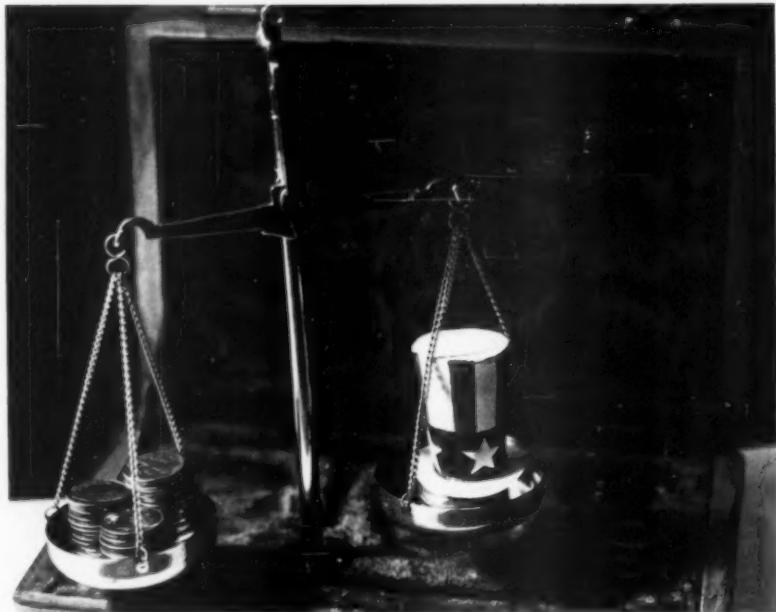
A government study recently concluded average federal office space per employee is excessive, therefore, needlessly expensive. What are the paybacks for facing down the territorial imperative and taking steps to tighten-up space for federal employees?

- Employees gain less cluttered and more efficient work areas in better designed offices.
- Managers of federal agencies will consolidate functions into somewhat smaller areas, reducing leasing costs for Uncle Sam.

There has been a tendency in federal reform matters to aggrandize both "overall waste" problems and solutions which lead to "government-wide savings." The space-reduction plan is no exception. In truth, however, managers will not be asking their staffs to surrender massive square footage—and the dollar savings they can achieve in the office are just large enough to garner favorable attention from superiors.

For years, GSA-managed space inventory has been growing topsy-turvy.

The government's total world-wide space inventory is 3.2 billion square feet. Of this total, GSA leased 89 million square feet at a whopping cost of \$847 million in FY '84. Buildings owned by GSA comprise 139 million square feet. These figures exclude space leased by other agencies under their own authority and Defense Department space which approaches 2.2 billion square feet.



Charles Sampson, who heads GSA's space management campaign says his agency's own home turf averages 135 square feet of useable work space per employee, "a comfortable work environment for efficient performance."

Former GSA Administrator Gerald Carmen's report to the Cabinet Council on Management and Administration showed a 28 percent space savings. These are the statistics which convinced President Reagan to sign the Government Work Space Management Reform in March 1983. The order mandates each federal agency reduce its total space by 10 percent. In addition, an agency average of 135 square feet per employee is earmarked—down from the current 164 square feet allocation. Sampson says the order "will save \$1.8 billion per year" when all agencies comply.

How are office logistics evaluated? Questions are asked. Is the old three-section bookcase needed, or the oversized desk? If not, space is wasted. So the first step—removing unnecessary furniture—gives the manager a framework in which to consolidate employees' personal space.

Next, quantify office space savings. Managers may want to develop a

guesstimate on the amount saved by the agency. The annual national average leasing cost to GSA is \$8.58 per square foot.

Mike Poole, acting Director for Personnel at the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, sees the directive as a blessing for the government, but a nightmare for landlords collecting fat rent checks.

Space shuffling does not pack employees like sardines. "People think of open space as a rat maze," admits Poole, whose agency has begun its own money-saving study. "Sure you want privacy and room to work. With the help of a designer that is not a problem."

What if the employee works in a government-owned facility rather than leased space? The Cabinet Council has established a long-range goal to establish an 80-20 ratio of government-owned versus leased office space. The Council is overseeing the transition from the current 50-50 split.

Just as "weight-watchers" organizations help the obese, the Public Buildings Service branch of GSA is scheduled to release a catalogue of modular office groups designed to slim-down our square footage fat. ■

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# Reactions... Rebuttals... Retorts

Even outsiders appreciate 'Ms. Management,' a new advice column which doesn't read like government issue. The OPM feature—a gentle parody of the 'Miss Manners' newspaper etiquette column—is written by Mary Ann Maloney to adroitly guide federal managers...I am impressed.

Joyce Lain Kennedy  
Careers Column  
Chicago Sun Times

Young supervisors would be running toward a big mistake if they use Leave Without Pay (LWOP) as a disciplinary tool per a suggestion in "Baby Boom Bosses" (Vol. 4, No. 4). The *Federal Personnel Manual* doesn't indicate such an intended purpose. Perhaps, suspensions—not LWOP. Ditto all good things on 'Retorts' page. Cartoons by Mr. Hancock are great!

Paul Sumner  
Alabama National Guard

As a government editor I hate to nitpick, but Turner's editorial 'Sci-Fi Fed' (Vol. 4, No. 2) jars me. Actor Raymond Massey was a native of Canada, so I guess you are correct to call him American. But—do I dare—the films *1984*, *Brave New World* and *Soylent Green* are by English writers—not 'American filmists.' Have a nice day.

James K. Herron  
Washington State



Ms. Management (reporter Mary Ann Maloney) scrutinizes a new poster designed by noted cartoonist Malcolm Hancock.

Management covers what really matters in the day-to-day environment of a federal executive. I don't always agree with what I read in the magazine but I never fail to read it cover to cover. My compliments for truly achieving excellence and excitement in the same publication. Quite a feat.

Joe Maas  
Small Business  
Administration

Management went on a UN game hunt but forgot the ammunition. You refer to a Heritage Foundation report which "documents UN media campaigns promoting enlargement of federal agencies in developing nations." The report is critical of UN's Department of Public Information but makes no such charge. In fact, the UN publication, *Development Forum*, carries an article by a U.S. employee critical of big bureaucracy and plugs decentralization and market mechanisms in its March issue. May's front page piece argues Latin American governmental policies are "the main roots of (their regional) crisis." Page two features Reagan appointee Peter McPherson, AID, making much the same point about sub-Saharan Africa. Too many people go gunning for the UN without checking facts. I hope you aren't joining the safari.

Peter Fromuth  
UN Association of the USA

...AND I'M NOT GOING TO ALLOW EQUAL TIME FOR A SPOKESMAN FOR AN OPPOSITE POINT OF VIEW BECAUSE I DON'T ACCEPT THE VALIDITY OF ANY OPPOSITE POINT OF VIEW



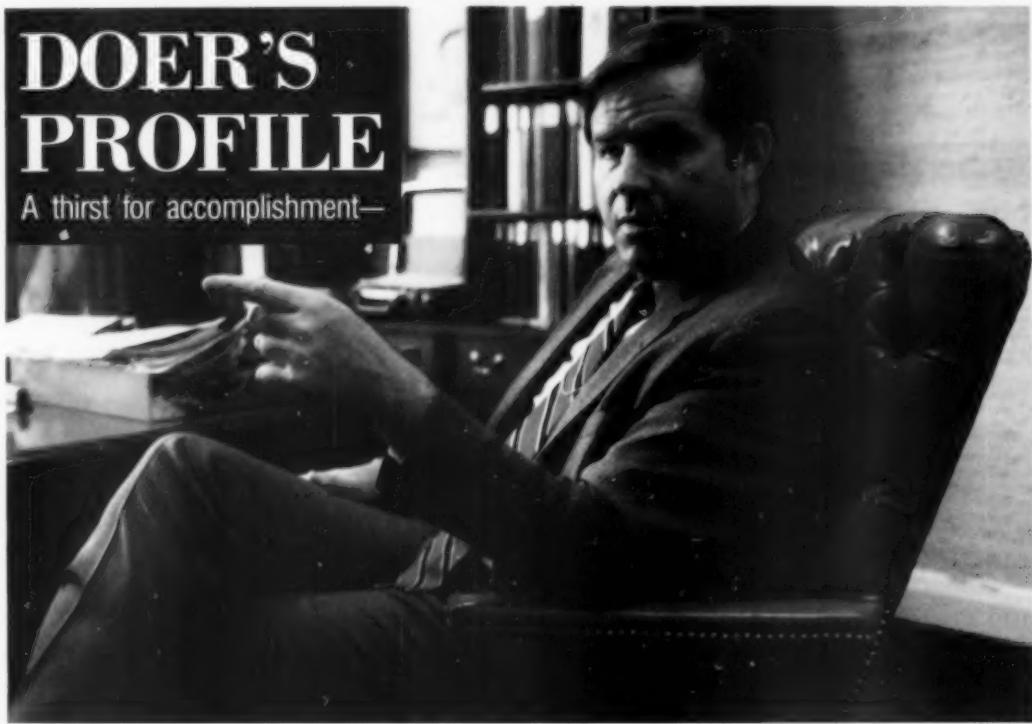
Management is a splendid little magazine and I enjoy it very much. William P. Cheshire  
Editor, Editorial Pages Washington Times

It is refreshing to be part of a federal agency which provides copies of Management magazine to all managerial staff. The articles are timely, pertinent and presented in easily understood prose by recognized experts. I am disappointed, however, it is only published quarterly.

Wayne O. Deason  
Department of Interior

# DOER'S PROFILE

A thirst for accomplishment—



## RICHARD KUSSEROW

Inspector General, Department of Health and Human Services

"I want this organization to run better than a private sector corporation. I want to improve management in government to the extent the private sector will want to study us and learn from us.

"It takes more skill to manage in the government than in the private sector. We all know managers who gave it a go in the federal service only to return to a major corporation wringing their hands in failure and complaining about Washington ways.

"When I came to Washington, my great ambition was to be able to say before Congress, 'Mr. Chairman, I am proud to announce audit dollars and convictions actually have decreased significantly because opportunities to commit fraud and waste in our Department's programs have been eliminated.' Although this hasn't happened yet, we've taken the first step. Savings and recoveries for 1981 totaled \$165 million and

\$1.4 billion in 1983. With sustained efficiency, we'll see a leveling off.

"I didn't come to this city of mirages and unreality to hunt for scalps. I came because this great Department needed processes which make it more efficient.

"Federal employees are the best for responding to good leadership. There's a direct correlation between the quality of management and the quality of service. They just need to know what their leadership expects from them and they will bust their buns to provide it. And like other leaders in this town, I read **Management**. It's full of good ideas and I love its gung-ho attitude."



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